JOSEPHINE HUMPHREYS' CHARLESTON P. 80 • D.I.Y. FUNERAL P. 86

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MARCH 2009

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10 MUST-SEE ENDANGERED CULTURAL TREASURES

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REMBRANDT'S RIVAL

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THE MAN WHO SAVED MARC CHAGALL

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XUMI SHAN SHI KU,
NINGXIA CULTURAL RELICS PRESERVING COMMITTEE & DEPT. OF ART HISTORY, CENTRAL ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS EDS., BEIJING: WENWU PRESS, 1988

THIS PAGE ***Boy in a Cape and Turban*** **by Jan Lievens, c. 1631.**
PRIVATE COLLECTION

The work the two produced was not always easy to tell apart, and many a superior Lievens was misattributed to Rembrandt.

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"MY KIND OF TOWN"
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With its historic architecture, Charleston is a favorite of moviemakers. Many a Civil War film has been shot on these streets.

PHOTOGRAPH BY IRA BLOCK / IPN

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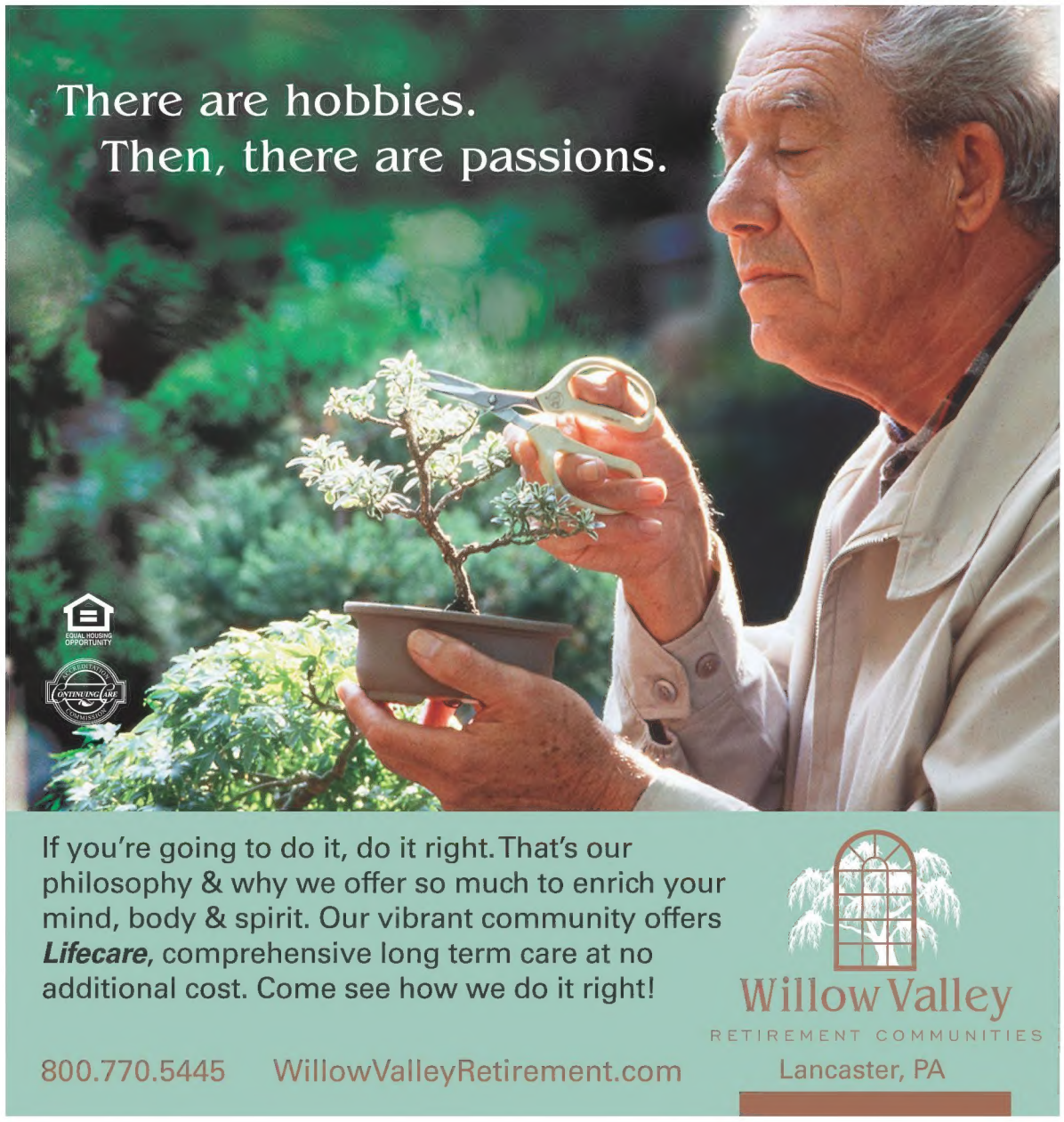
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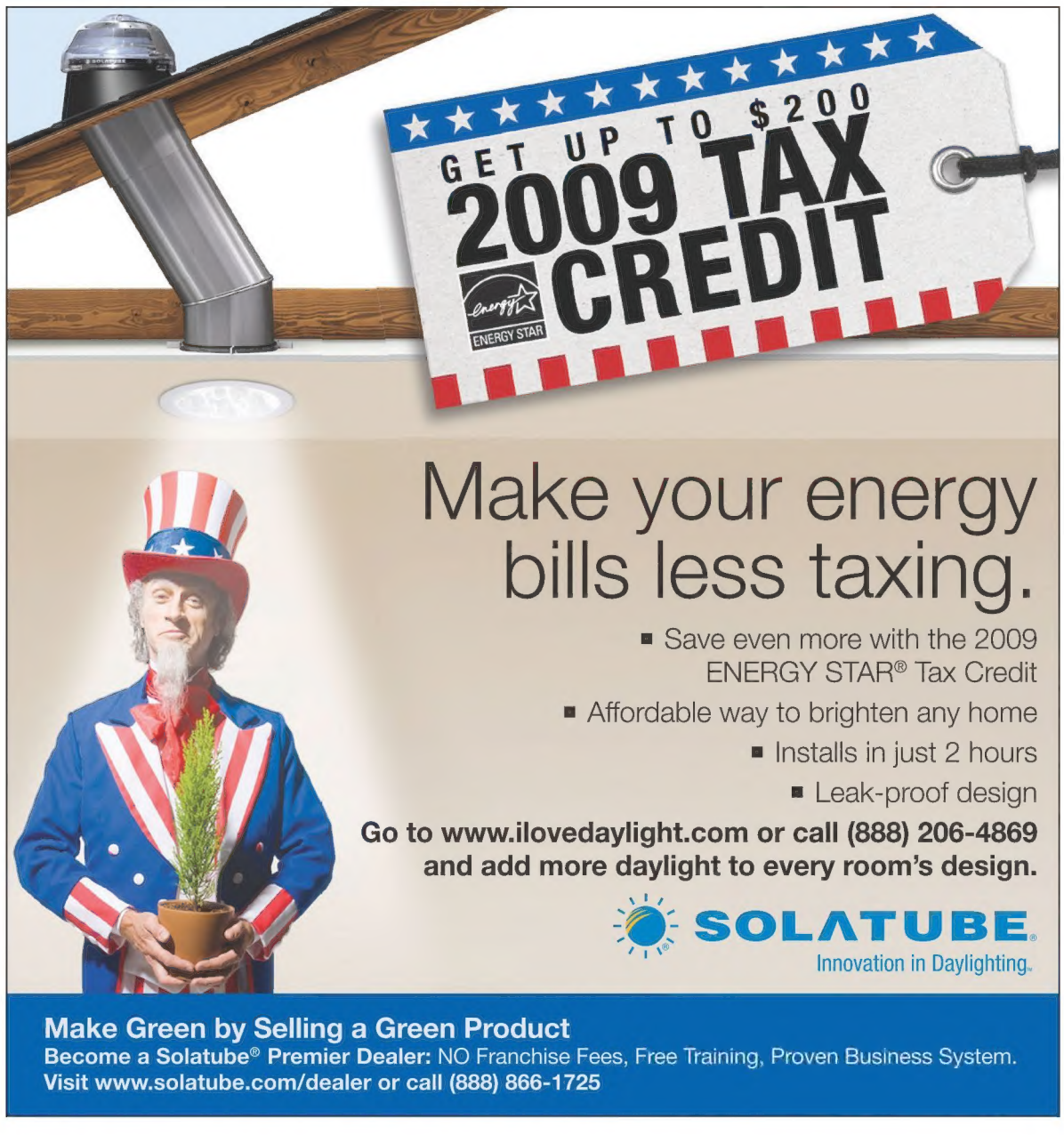
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FROM THE EDITOR

Paying Attention

Ten Sites and One Overlooked Hero

BY CAREY WINFREY

SENIOR EDITOR MARK STRAUSS took on our special 20-page, staff-written cover report—"10 Must-See Endangered Cultural Treasures" (p. 30)—with characteristic brio. "It's important to call attention to those treasures that people may not be aware of," he says. "I think people take seriously the idea that these sites belong to a common heritage."

In addition to choosing sites that are not so well known, Strauss selected only those that readers can actually visit, avoiding both those too fragile for tourist traffic or any in conflict zones. "We also wanted to give a sense of the incredible span of history," says Strauss, "so we have sites dating from 20,000-year-old rock carvings to contemporary Art Deco structures along historic Route 66. I think what our stories reveal is that the one strand that connects human beings from one generation to the next is a very powerful urge to create."

Strauss: A powerful urge to create

"EVEN AFTER HALF A CENTURY, there are little nuggets of stories about World War II that have just not been told or have not been understood very well," says Peter Eisner, a former foreign correspondent and editor at the *Washington Post* and co-author of *The Italian Letter,* a 2007 critique of the Bush administration. Eisner came upon just such a nugget when a relative sent him a newspaper item about a new postage stamp bearing the likeness of American diplomat Hiram Bingham IV. "It started me off," he says, "on seeing how much I could find out about him."

The result of Eisner's research is the story we call "Bingham's List" (p. 50). Bingham, the son of the explorer long credited with discovering Machu Picchu—though there are new questions about that; see "In Dispute," page 55—worked in the U.S. Consulate in Marseille, France, during the German occupation. There, to the displeasure of his State Department superiors, he threw himself into the risky business of helping Jews and others flee the Nazis. For his efforts, he was yanked from his post and marked as too independent for his own good. "It's a story of personal responsibility," says Eisner. "That's the impressive thing. 'I have a career. I want to be an ambassador. But I'm seeing suffering that I just can't accept.' That's what he was saying. 'I'm going to give up everything for my own moral code.' I think that's an important lesson for everybody."

OUR 7TH ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST begins March 2, 2009 (to December 1, 2009). Go to Smithsonian.com/photocontest for rules, other contest information and to submit your photos. March 2 is also the day we announce 50 finalists from our just concluded 6th contest and invite readers to vote for their favorites. Get shooting!

BRENDAN MCCABE

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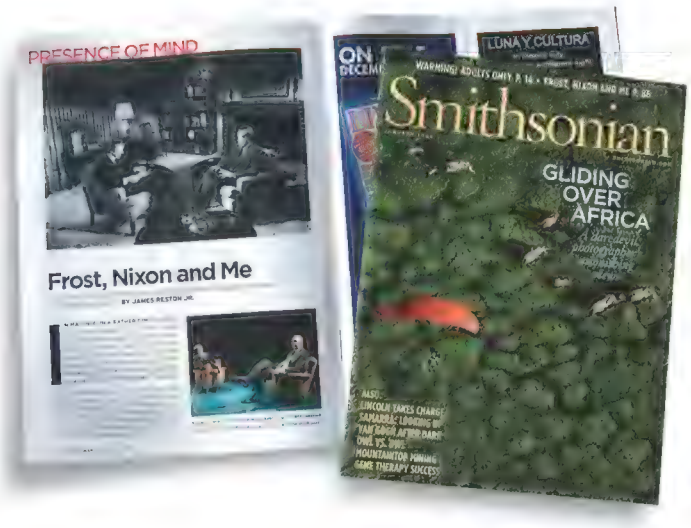

I chuckled when James Reston Jr. wrote ["Frost, Nixon and Me"] that "there was one true account of the Frost/Nixon interviews—my own." It reminded me of a quote from Julian Barnes' *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*: "History isn't what happened. History is just what historians tell us."

JOHN BRIDGES, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

HISTORY AS ENTERTAINMENT

JAMES RESTON aptly defends the accurate presentation of historic events until his final statement: "In the presence of the playwright's achievement, the historian . . . can only stand in the wings and applaud." I do not applaud the distortion of documented historical fact. Many people get harmfully false ideas of history from plays and films. In reaching for an international audience, *Frost/Nixon*'s producer could probably create a stirring portrayal of the Khmer Rouge.

DONALD GALFOND
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

RESTON'S piece about *Frost/Nixon* is like most writing about historic events—subjective. His views on Nixon are tainted by his distaste for the Vietnam conflict. He states, "The absence of a judicial prosecution had left the country with a feeling of unfinished business." My friends, relatives, neighbors and I would disagree. The media could refrain from placing all of us in the same bus. We have our own individual opinions. Few things, if any, can be said to be the voice of our entire wonderful country.

LEO MARZONI III
DALLAS, TEXAS

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WHAT COAL DOES

"DEMOLISHING," "dismantling," "pulverized" and "devastation" are just a few of the words used by author John McQuaid to describe mountaintop coal removal ["Mining the Mountains"]. Here are some words I would use: comfortable, warm, reliable, safe, dependable. These words describe my home, which is heated, lighted and cooled by electricity, the majority of which is generated by burning coal and wood. I think this process, also called strip mining, is the safest way to access coal. I lived in West Virginia over 20 years and I don't enjoy the way strip mines look. What I do enjoy is what happens when I flip a switch or turn the dial on my thermostat. If you do not want to contribute to the "devastation," then call the power company and request that they terminate your service. Your conscience will be satisfied that no salamanders are being disturbed for your benefit.

CHUCK LITTLE
BRODNAX, VIRGINIA

I LIVE IN the Sierra Nevada foothills of California, where mountains were destroyed by hydraulic gold mining in the late 1800s. The barren landscape is as visible today as it was more than 100 years ago. After reading your article and seeing the destruction of the Appalachian peaks, I am left with only one question: Haven't we learned anything?

ROBERT SUTER
GOLD RUN, CALIFORNIA

THANK YOU for "Mining the Mountains," which conveys the community of Ansted's struggle to come to grips with high unemployment and the destructive practice of coal mining that involves mountaintop removal. An alternative not mentioned by Mr. McQuaid is a new wind farm. A recent study released by an environmental consulting firm, Downstream Strategies, along with some West Virginia University professors, found that a wind farm on nearby Coal River Mountain in the long-term would create more jobs than mountaintop coal removal. Even short-term, wind is a better option for the local economy when health and environmental externalities are considered. Wind in key locations in Appalachia could help support energy independence, prevent climate change and create new green-collar jobs.

EVAN HANSEN
MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA

CORRECTIONS:

The caption on page 36 of the article "Samarra Rises" wrongly identified Lt. Col. J. P. McGee as Captain Kurtzman. In a reference on "The Last Page" to the birth name of singer Shania Twain, we omitted one of the "l's" in Eilleen. We regret the errors.

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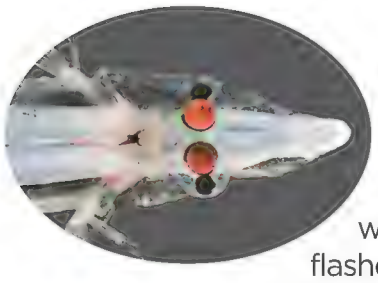
WILD THINGS

LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

BY AMANDA BENSEN, JOSEPH CAPUTO, T. A. FRAIL, JESSE RHODES AND ABIGAIL TUCKER



VISION THING

The rarely seen spookfish dwells in dark ocean depths, where bioluminescent flashes from other creatures can be the only light. When scientists this past year caught a live spookfish for the first time in the South Pacific, they found its two elaborate eyes are positioned to capture light from both above and below. Stranger still, reflective crystals focus light onto the retina—making the spookfish the only vertebrate whose vision is based on mirrors.

SPECIES HOT SPOT

Between 1997 and 2007, more than 1,000 species previously unknown to science were discovered in Southeast Asia's Greater Mekong region, according to a report by the World Wildlife Fund. That's about two new species a week. The Greater Mekong has the highest concentration of different ecosystems in mainland Asia, and the Mekong River supports more wildlife per square mile than the Amazon. Newly documented flora and fauna include, clockwise from upper right, a woolly bat (*Kerivoula titania*); *Aeschynanthus mendumiae*; Gumprecht's green pit viper (*Trimeresurus gumprechti*); and the dragon millipede (*Desmoxytes purpurosea*).

MOSQUITO LOVE DUET

When two mosquitoes of the opposite sex approach each other, according to new research at Cornell University, they synchronize their wing beats and harmonize the buzzing, producing a high-frequency love duet. The researchers theorize that the ritual evolved as a form of sexual selection that helps females pick mates: if a male can't keep up with her song, she'll fly away to find a real Pavarotti.

Watch the mosquitoes harmonize at Smithsonian.com/WildThings

YES, THIS BIG LIZARD IS PINK

A new study from the University of Rome Tor Vergata shows that a rare strawberry-tinted land iguana in the Galápagos Islands is genetically distinct from other iguanas there, having diverged from them more than five million years ago as the archipelago formed. The rosada iguana—which escaped Darwin's notice—was discovered only recently, largely because it lives on the desolate slopes of an active volcano.

Observed

NAME: Moa, flightless birds (order *Dinornithiformes*) from New Zealand that went extinct hundreds of years ago.

HIGH LIFE: Some species (left: a giant moa) stood taller than nine feet and were believed to have feasted primarily on trees and shrubs.

LOW LIFE: Some bent low to eat herbs, according to a new analysis of fossilized moa dung by researchers from New Zealand and Australia.

BALANCED LIFE: Several of these plant species are now rare, perhaps in part because moas no longer spread their seeds around.

SOMSAK PANHA; GABOR CSORBA; RENE RIES; ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH; DR. TAMMY FRANK / HABOR BRANCH OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTION; THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON; NEWSCOM (2); COURTESY OF GABRIELE GENTILE

THE RELATIONSHIP OF PERSON TO PLACE
IS ONE OF THE QUIETEST, YET MOST PROFOUND.

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Monument Valley Girl

Cindy Sherman's self-portrait plays with our notions of an archetypal West

BY VICTORIA OLSEN

THE ENDURING image of the American West is one of endless plains and unpopulated vistas. In a 1904 photograph by Edward Curtis, the monumental cliffs of Canyon de Chelly in northern Arizona dwarf the Navajo horsemen riding by.

Then there's the photograph on this page, made in 1979: a lone woman sits on a tree branch in a desolate precinct of Monument Valley, near the border of Arizona and Utah. She—not the landscape—is the subject. Who is she? Why does she look as fresh as a cactus flower? And what is this photograph doing in the same exhibition as the Curtis picture from 1904?

The exhibition, "Into the Sunset: Photography's Image of the American West," goes on display March 29 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City (through June 8). Almost any survey of photography and the American West would include work from the expeditions Curtis made between 1900 and 1930 to document the lives of Native Americans. This picture, by Cindy Sherman, is a bit of a surprise. Sherman, born in 1954, is best known for dressing up in character and photographing herself. (That is her posing as what she calls a "Monument Valley girl.") What do Sherman's self-portraits have to do with the mythologies of the West?

This image is one of a series of what she calls "film stills," made between 1977 and 1980. In each she photographed herself in black and white dressed as a generic character inspired by movies of the 1940s, '50s

Sherman has said she "didn't want to compete with the landscape," but she cleared space for a new Western woman.

Although director John Ford's most famous westerns, including *Stagecoach* and *The Searchers*, were filmed in Monument Valley, Sherman's photograph resists any reference to cowboys or Indians. Instead, it offers an alternative mythology, with a woman displacing Curtis' horsemen or Clint Eastwood's "man with no name." (Her other Arizona film stills feature other kinds of women, as if to suggest that the possibilities of the frontier include self-invention.)

"Our image of the West was always constructed," says Eva Respini, assistant curator of photography at MoMA, who organized "Into the Sunset." "Curtis' Canyon de Chelly is a fabrication, just like Sherman's." And just as Sherman uses costume to transform herself, Curtis sometimes had his Native American subjects change into traditional dress. "She may look here like a wistful, lonesome country girl," says Respini of Sherman, "but she's really playing a Western type."

"Our image of the West was always constructed," the curator says. "Curtis' Canyon de Chelly is a fabrication, just like Sherman's."

and '60s. The scenes were narratives "without involving other people, just suggesting them outside the frame," she wrote in the preface to her book *The Complete Untitled Film Stills*. She avoided putting titles on the images to preserve their ambiguity. (This one is *Untitled Film Still #43*.) She wanted viewers to be able to invent their own stories to suit the scene, perhaps even insert themselves in it. The women in these photographs, she wrote, "are on their way to wherever the action is (or to their doom) . . . or have just come from a confrontation (or a tryst)."

Sherman made this photograph while on a vacation with her parents. She loaded a camera, a tripod and a suitcase full of wigs, makeup and costumes into a station wagon, and whenever she saw an interesting location she asked her parents to stop while she set up a scene to shoot. She says she was interested in playing with stereotypes and visual clichés.

Sherman has said she "didn't want to compete with the landscape" in the pictures she made in Arizona, but this one shows her ability to do so. Her centrality in the foreground helps, but so does her pose, with a bare leg on the tree limb echoing the shape of the cliff behind her. The picture subtly suggests a relationship between women and nature that is missing from the generic Western landscape.

Curtis' photographs of Native Americans (above: Navajo in *Canyon de Chelly*, 1904) sometimes romanticized their subjects, in the view of modern critics. In the self-portraits she called her "film stills," Sherman (below: in 2000) sought to create women "on their way to wherever the action is."

Sherman stopped taking her film stills photographs around 1980. "I knew it was over when I started repeating myself," she wrote. She has spent the decades since exploring role-playing through color self-portraits.

Americans may have run out of frontier, but we haven't given up our preoccupation with it. Joan Didion wrote in *Where I Was From* that California, where her family lived for generations, remains a "wearying enigma . . . we worry it, correct and revise it, try and fail to define our relationship to it and its relationship to the rest of the country." The same holds true for the wider West. But each revision has the potential to show us something new. Cindy Sherman redefined the valley, and the girl.

VICTORIA OLSEN *is the author of* From Life: Julia Margaret Cameron and Victorian Photography.

EDWARD CURTIS / LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST, COURTESY HASTED HUNT, NEW YORK CITY, © MARTIN SCHOELLER; PP. 14-15 THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK, © 2009 CINDY SHERMAN

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THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES
MOMENTOUS OR MERELY MEMORABLE

BY ALISON McLEAN

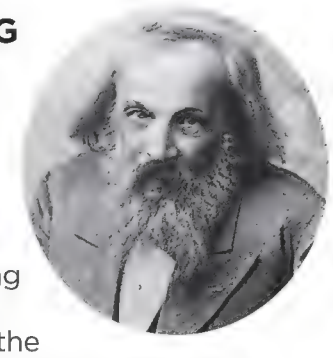
120 YEARS AGO
TOWERING ACHIEVEMENT

"There's an attraction in things colossal," responds Gustave Eiffel to detractors who say his Paris tower—completed March 31, 1889, for the Universal Exhibition—is "useless and monstrous." At 1,023 feet, the Eiffel Tower—which will serve as a weather, telegraph and radio broadcast station as well as city symbol—is the world's tallest man-made structure, till 1929.

20 and 30 YEARS AGO ENERGY CRISES

On March 24, 1989, a decade after the March 28, 1979, partial core meltdown in a reactor at Pennsylvania's Three Mile Island (TMI) nuclear plant (right), the tanker *Exxon Valdez* (left) runs aground in Alaska's Prince William Sound, spilling 11 million gallons of oil, polluting 1,300 miles of coastline and decimating wildlife. The crisis of confidence in nuclear power safety that TMI sets off provokes stiffer rules and oversight; new plant applications are delayed until 2007. The *Valdez* spill leads to improved response plans and a requirement that ships in Prince William Sound be double-hulled by 2015.

140 YEARS AGO TABLE SETTING



Dmitri Mendeleev's periodic table of elements, the first to be widely adopted, is presented to the Russian Chemical Society in March 1869. By arranging the 63 known elements in horizontal rows by atomic weight, Mendeleev recognizes that vertical patterns of similarities among the elements emerge if he leaves spaces between some of them, and he predicts the existence and properties of the missing elements. Within 15 years the discoveries of three new elements begin to prove his theories. Later scientists arrange the table—which now contains 111 officially recognized elements—by atomic number.

220 YEARS AGO PEOPLE POWER

The first United States Congress convenes in New York City's newly built Federal Hall March 4, 1789. "I believe there will be inclination and abilities in the two houses to do everything that reasonable and sensible men can promise to themselves," writes Pennsylvania Senator Robert Morris. Before ending their session in 1791, the 95 members form committees; establish procedures; create the departments of war, foreign affairs and the treasury; enact the supreme, federal and district courts—and pass the Bill of Rights.

60 YEARS AGO ROUND TRIP

On March 2, 1949, ninety-four hours after taking off from Carswell Air Force base in Fort Worth, Texas, *Lucky Lady II*, a B-50 Superfortress piloted by Capt. James Gallagher, completes the first nonstop flight around the world. The crew of 14 refuels the plane four times in midair during the more than 23,000-mile trip. The secret mission surprises even the crew's families—"I'd have had a storming tizzy if I'd known about it beforehand," second pilot Arthur Neal's wife tells a reporter—but is announced on completion as a demonstration of American ability to deliver bombs to any location.

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Devil's Half Acre

The excavation of a notorious jail recalls Richmond, Virginia's leading role in the slave trade

BY ABIGAIL TUCKER

ARCHAEOLOGISTS KNEW that Robert Lumpkin's slave jail stood in one of the lowest parts of Richmond, Virginia—a sunken spot known as Shockoe Bottom. From the 1830s to the Civil War, when Richmond was the largest American slave-trading hub outside of New Orleans, "the devil's half acre," as Lumpkin's complex was called, sat amid a swampy cluster of tobacco warehouses, gallows and African-American cemeteries. This winter, after five months of digging, researchers uncovered the foundation of the two-and-a-half-story brick building where hundreds of people were confined and tortured. Buried under nearly 14 feet of earth, the city's most notorious slave jail was down a hill some eight feet below the rest of Lumpkin's complex—the lowest of the low.

"People inside would have felt hemmed in, trapped," says Matthew Laird, whose firm, the James River Institute for Archaeology Inc., uncovered the 80- by 160-foot plot. On a wet December day, the site was a deep, raw pit pocked with mud puddles, with an old brick retaining wall that divided the bottom—which soaked workers were struggling to pump dry—into two distinct tiers.

A century and a half ago, there would have been plenty of traffic back and forth between the upper level of the complex, where the master lived and entertained guests, and the lower, where slaves waited to be sold. Lumpkin, a "bully trader" known as a man with a flair for cruelty, fathered five children with a black woman named Mary, who was a former slave and who eventually acted as his wife and took his name. Mary had at least some contact with the unfortunates her husband kept in chains, on one occasion smuggling a hymnal into the prison for an escaped slave named Anthony Burns.

"Imagine the pressure that was applied, and what she had to live through," says Delores McQuinn, chairwoman of

Archaeologists excavating the jail (top: sketch) had to cope with groundwater that filled trenches as fast as they were dug.

JAMES RIVER INSTITUTE; DAVID M. DOODY / JAMES RIVER INSTITUTE

A walk on the center of the earth?

Not a bad place, one would think, to forget about modern life.

One step on the Tablelands, a barren mound of rust-colored rocks thrown up from the earth's mantle half a billion years ago, and you're literally standing on the center of the earth. It's a stranger among its lush neighbors, aloof from the rest of the world, much like the

feeling you get when you take your first step on this ancient plateau, towering thousands of feet over the Atlantic in Gros Morne National Park, a world UNESCO Heritage site. And yet, as these cliffs dwarf your very existence, you'll somehow feel at peace with the world. Especially with generous amounts of fresh air filling wide open spaces – more than enough, certainly, for a complete purge of body, mind, and soul. Until, at the very least, you return to your B&B to rest up for yet another journey to the only place in North America where you can walk on the center of the earth.

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CANADA

Richmond's Slave Trail Commission, which promotes awareness of the city's antebellum past and sponsored much of the dig.

Though Lumpkin's jail stood only three blocks from where the state capitol building is today, except for local history buffs "no one had a clue that this was here," McQuinn says. Razed in the 1870s or '80s, the jail and Lumpkin's other buildings were long buried beneath a parking lot for university students, part of it lost forever under a roaring strip of Interstate 95. Preservation efforts didn't coalesce until 2005, when plans for a new baseball stadium threatened the site, which archaeologists had pinpointed using historical maps.

The place has haunted McQuinn ever since her initial visit in 2003, soon after she first learned of its existence. "I started weeping and couldn't stop. There was a presence here. I felt a bond," she said. "It's a heaviness that I've felt over and over again."

Digging from August to December in "this place of sighs," as James B. Simmons, an abolitionist minister, called the jail in 1895, Laird and his team found evidence of a kitchen and cobblestone courtyard on the upper level of Lumpkin's property, but didn't verify finding the jail itself until the last weeks of work. Even then they couldn't do much more than mark the spot, because groundwater from a nearby creek filled up trenches almost as fast as they could be dug. Decades of dampness had its advantages, though. Because oxygen does not penetrate wet soil, the bacteria that typically break down organic matter don't survive. As a result, many details of daily life were preserved: wooden toothbrushes, leather shoes and fabric.

The archaeologists found no whipping rings, iron bars or other harsh artifacts of slavery, but there were traces of the variety of lives within the compound. Shards of tableware included both fine hand-painted English china and coarse earthenware. Parts of a child's doll were also recovered on the site, a hint of playtime in a place where some people were starved into submission. To whom did the doll belong? Did its owner also belong to someone?

"Robert Lumpkin came out of nowhere," says Philip Schwarz, a professor emeritus of history at Virginia Commonwealth University who has researched the Lumpkin family for years. Lumpkin began his career as an itinerant businessman, traveling through the South and buying unwanted slaves before purchasing an existing jail compound in Richmond in the 1840s. With a designated "whipping room," where slaves were stretched out on the floor and flogged, the jail functioned as a human clearinghouse and as a purgatory for the rebellious.

Mary Lumpkin smuggled a hymnal to captured slave Anthony Burns (above).

Burns, the escaped slave who, after fleeing Virginia, was recaptured in Boston and returned to Richmond under the Fugitive Slave Act, was confined in Lumpkin's jail for four months in 1854, until Northern abolitionists purchased his freedom. According to an account Burns gave his biographer, Charles Emery Stevens, the slave was isolated in a room "only six or eight feet square," on a top floor accessible by trapdoor. Most of the time he was kept handcuffed and fettered, causing "his feet to swell enormously. . . . The fetters also prevented him from removing his clothing by day or night, and no one came to help him. . . . His room became more foul and noisome than the hovel of a brute; loathsome creeping things multiplied and rioted in the filth." He was fed "putrid meat" and given little water and soon fell seriously ill. Through the cracks in the floor he observed a female slave stripped naked for a potential buyer.

Meanwhile, Lumpkin sent two of his mixed-race daughters to finishing school in Massachusetts. According to Charles Henry Corey, a former Union army chaplain, Lumpkin later sent the girls and their mother to live in the free state of Pennsylvania, concerned that a "financial contingency might arise when these, his own beautiful daughters, might be sold into slavery to pay his debts."

"He was both an evil man and a family man," Schwarz says.

Lumpkin was in Richmond in April 1865 when the city fell to Union soldiers. Shackling some 50 enslaved and weeping men, women and children together, the trader tried to board a train heading south, but there was no room. He died not long after the war ended. In his will, Lumpkin described Mary only as a person "who resides with me." Nonetheless he left her all his real estate.

In 1867, a Baptist minister named Nathaniel Colver was looking for a space for the black seminary he hoped to start. After a day of prayer, he set out into the city's streets, where he met Mary in a group of "colored people," recalling her as a "large, fair-faced freedwoman, nearly white, who said that *she* had a place which she thought I could have." After the bars were torn out of the windows, Mary leased Lumpkin's jail as the site of the school that became Virginia Union University, now on Lombardy Street in Richmond.

"The old slave pen was no longer 'the devil's half acre' but God's half acre," Simmons wrote.

Mary Lumpkin went on to run a restaurant in Louisiana with one of her daughters. She died in New Richmond, Ohio, in 1905 at 72.

McQuinn, who is also a minister, hopes the site will one day become a museum. Though it has been reburied for the time being, she says it will never again be forgotten: "The sweetest part," she says, "is now we have a story to tell."

ABIGAIL TUCKER *is* SMITHSONIAN'S *staff writer.*

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Around the Mall

SCENES AND SIGHTINGS FROM THE SMITHSONIAN MUSEUMS AND BEYOND

STEPHEN VOSS / WPN

CASE CLOSED

FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGISTS AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY SOLVE A 17TH-CENTURY CRIME

PAGE 25

A servant (recreation by Joanna Hughes and StudioEis) was secretly buried in a Maryland cellar. Douglas Owsley and Kari Bruwelheide studied the boy's skeleton to learn what really happened.

From the Castle p. 24
Jukebox p. 25
Q&A: Ori Gersht p. 27
Making History p. 27
What's Up p. 28

FROM THE CASTLE

Science, yes!

G. WAYNE CLOUGH

IT WAS AN EXCITING DAY when Barack Obama named physicist Steven Chu (history's first Nobel laureate scientist cabinet nominee) as Secretary of Energy and chose two science advisers with previous ties to the Smithsonian. John Holdren, a professor of environmental policy, was selected to be the new director of the White House Office of Science and Technology, and marine biologist Jane Lubchenco was chosen to head the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. All three individuals understand the crucial connection between research, climate change and energy. Last century's 1 degree Fahrenheit spike in average global temperature and our continuing dependence on fossil fuels, such as oil, gas and coal, confront humankind with unprecedented challenges.

Igor Krupnik (right) works with Alaska native sea ice expert Conrad Oozeva.

I am honored to serve on the National Academy of Sciences' Summit Committee on America's Climate Choices and the bipartisan Leaders Project on Energy and National Security, chaired by former Senators William Cohen and Sam Nunn. Both groups are developing recommendations on energy, environment and national security goals. The questions are very difficult. How can we act on climate change while also ensuring safe, reliable and affordable energy? How do we best communicate complex alternatives to the public?

Smithsonian research helps answer these and similar questions. The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory measures atmospheric pollutants, including greenhouse gases, from space. Our Environmental Research Center studies the effects of increases in CO_2 on Chesapeake Bay coastal wetlands and Florida plant communities experiencing rising sea levels. Plant fossils from Wyoming helped National Museum of Natural History paleobotanist Scott Wing discover that a massive release of carbon—5,000 gigatons, or about the size of today's remaining fossil fuel reservoir—lifted global temperatures an average of 9 degrees 55 million years ago, changing the composition of vegetation all over the world. That event is being carefully studied since it is probably the best analogue for today's climate changes.

Our Tropical Research Institute oversees the Global Earth Observatories Program, which measures the CO_2 absorbed—and thus removed from the atmosphere—by millions of trees in 34 large-scale study plots in 20 countries worldwide. This is a unique, standardized way to assess climate change's impact on the function and biodiversity of forest ecosystems. In the Arctic, anthropologist Igor Krupnik collaborates with native people to understand their adaptations to increasingly unpredictable weather and shrinking sea ice. The Smithsonian Institution informs climate and ecosystem change discussions while also aiming for environmental sustainability—including in our own physical plant. So we join the new presidential science appointees in working toward a greener future for us all.

G. WAYNE CLOUGH *is Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.*

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G. Wayne Clough

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BONE COPS

SMITHSONIAN RESEARCHERS SOLVE A COLONIAL COLD CASE

The boy's skeleton was crammed into a cellar pit (above), with a broken ceramic milk pan lying across his rib cage. His skull (left) showed evidence of abuse. "Dirt was caked into the crevices of the milk pan's worn edges," says Owsley. "We know it was used to bury the body."

THE BOY DOES NOT HAVE A NAME, but he is not unknown. Smithsonian scientists reconstructed his story from a skeleton, found in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, buried underneath a layer of fireplace ash, bottle and ceramic fragments, and animal bones.

Resting on top of the rib cage was the milk pan used to dig the grave. "It's obviously some sort of clandestine burial," says Kari Bruwelheide, who studied the body. "We call it a colonial cold case."

Bruwelheide is an assistant to forensic anthropologist Douglas Owsley. After more than a decade of cases that span the centuries, the duo has curated "Written in Bone: Forensic Files of the 17th-Century Chesapeake," on view at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History through February 2011. The exhibit shows visitors how forensic anthropologists analyze bones and artifacts to crack historical mysteries. "The public thinks they know a lot about it, but their knowledge is based on shows like 'Bones' and 'CSI,' so they get a lot of misinformation," Owsley says. "This is an opportunity for us to show the real thing."

Take the boy in the clandestine grave. Since the 1990s, the Lost Towns Project in Annapolis, Maryland—which aims to rediscover settlements that have disappeared from the landscape—has conducted excavations in Anne Arundel County, a social and political hub in colonial Maryland. When intern Erin Cullen unearthed a skull in a 17th-century cellar, archaeologists at Lost Towns sought out Owsley.

He recognized that the skull belonged to a Caucasian male. Further analyses indicated the male was of European descent and 15 to 16 years old. The boy's spine and teeth were damaged from hard labor or disease. This profile fit that of an indentured servant in the Chesapeake Bay of the mid-17th century. During this time, young European men and women signed indenture contracts with Chesapeake planters, merchants and tradesmen. Typically, servants needed to work for at least four years to pay off the debt, but it was not uncommon for them to die during the harsh conditions of bondage.

Based on the artifacts surrounding the body—including a coin dated 1664 and a piece of window that has a date stamp of 1663—archaeologist Jane Cox determined that the boy had died between 1665 and 1675. That time frame corresponds to when laws were being passed against the private burial of indentured servants, to prevent owners from covering up instances of abuse. The boy's right wrist was fractured in a way that suggested he used his arm to block a strong blow shortly before his death. That injury, along with the awkward burial, points to a violent end. "They were burying him in secret so they would not have to report the death," Bruwelheide surmises.

For Owsley, reconstructing the lives of people whose skeletons he uncovers is the most important part of the job. "The story of these individuals is their legacy," he says.

JOSEPH CAPUTO

CHIP CLARK / NMNH, SI (2); SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS RECORDINGS

SING LIKE A PIRATE Born in 1530, the Pirate Queen Granuaile was raised in an Ireland where English law was usurping Gaelic sovereignty. She refused to submit to authority and raided merchant ships bound for Galway Bay. According to legend, she fought off English troops besieging her stronghold by melting the roof and pouring molten lead on her attackers. The stories of her resistance, spread by ballad singers for centuries, became a symbol for Irish nationalism. Irish-American folk singer Dan Milner adapted one such political broadside, "Granuaile," for Smithsonian Folkways' newly released "Irish Pirate Ballads and Other Songs of the Sea." Hear the salty chanteys at Smithsonian.com/jukebox. **JOSEPH CAPUTO**

JUKEBOX

Go behind the scenes with the anthropologists, at Smithsonian.com/writteninbone

THE OBJECT AT HAND | Unmanned Aircraft

NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM

UNDER THE RADAR

The five-pound RQ-14A takes high-tech reconnaissance to new heights

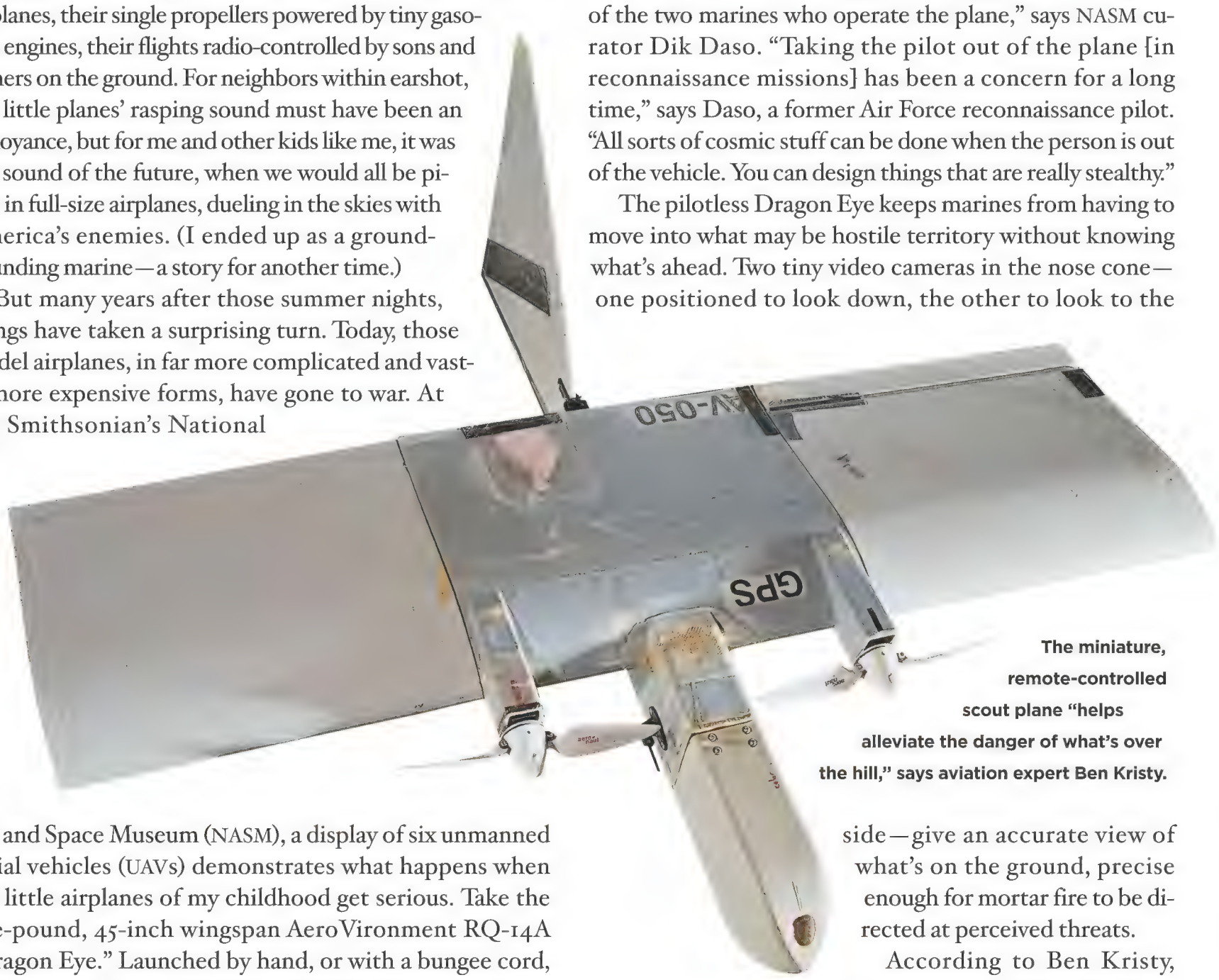
BY OWEN EDWARDS

EARLY ON WARM SUMMER EVENINGS in the small New Jersey town where I grew up, my father would take me to the ball field behind Benjamin Franklin Elementary School. The buzzing in the air was produced not by my home state's hummingbird-size mosquitoes, but by squadrons of model airplanes, their single propellers powered by tiny gasoline engines, their flights radio-controlled by sons and fathers on the ground. For neighbors within earshot, the little planes' rasping sound must have been an annoyance, but for me and other kids like me, it was the sound of the future, when we would all be pilots in full-size airplanes, dueling in the skies with America's enemies. (I ended up as a ground-pounding marine—a story for another time.)

But many years after those summer nights, things have taken a surprising turn. Today, those model airplanes, in far more complicated and vastly more expensive forms, have gone to war. At the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum (NASM), a display of six unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) demonstrates what happens when the little airplanes of my childhood get serious. Take the five-pound, 45-inch wingspan AeroVironment RQ-14A "Dragon Eye." Launched by hand, or with a bungee cord, the tiny scout plane is controlled by GPS coordinates entered into its guidance system with a standard laptop computer. Once aloft on its mission—to transmit video images of territory lying ahead of a marine infantry or transport unit—the little scout is completely autonomous.

"The video is received in special eyeglasses worn by one of the two marines who operate the plane," says NASM curator Dik Daso. "Taking the pilot out of the plane [in reconnaissance missions] has been a concern for a long time," says Daso, a former Air Force reconnaissance pilot. "All sorts of cosmic stuff can be done when the person is out of the vehicle. You can design things that are really stealthy."

The pilotless Dragon Eye keeps marines from having to move into what may be hostile territory without knowing what's ahead. Two tiny video cameras in the nose cone—one positioned to look down, the other to look to the side—give an accurate view of what's on the ground, precise enough for mortar fire to be directed at perceived threats.



The miniature, remote-controlled scout plane "helps alleviate the danger of what's over the hill," says aviation expert Ben Kristy.

According to Ben Kristy, aviation curator at the National Museum of the Marine Corps near Quantico, Virginia, the Dragon Eye is "a force multiplier. It helps alleviate the danger of what's over the hill." He says

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE; ERIC LONG / NASM

Watch Dragon Eye in flight at Smithsonian.com/object

the craft's two propellers and two electric motors allow it to stay up for between 30 minutes and an hour, depending on the wind. "The goal is 60 missions, and each battalion gets three airframes and spare parts."

Ron Colbow, a computer scientist and systems engineer with the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Dahlgren, Virginia, now on assignment to the Marine Corps Warfighting Lab in Quantico, helped develop the Dragon Eye. "We specifically made the system so that any marine trained to use Windows operating systems could fly the plane," he says. "It's a very forgiving aircraft. When it makes a belly landing on its Kevlar underside, the nose, tail and wings come off by design, to dissipate energy. And it can take a beating." On duty in Afghanistan, "the one on display at Air and Space hit a telephone pole, so the marines patched it with duct tape and sent it up again."

Unmanned and remote-controlled aircraft have a surprisingly long history. "The technology that goes into a UAV has been around for 100 years," Daso says, "since before World War I." Henry Ford and other top engineers helped to design both full-size and scale planes that were radio-controlled. The Great War ended before any of them could go into action. Now, Daso adds, "there are so many UAVs in the air, it's hard to keep track of them all."

The battered Dragon Eye on display is one of some 6,000 deployed since 2002, at about $80,000 apiece. Today, smaller and lighter models are being introduced, new "bugs," as they are known, that can fly into village compounds and look around at human eye level. Dragon Eye is being phased out; only about 100 remain in action. "There are unmanned aerial vehicles in development that fly like insects," says Colbow. "We'll see these systems doing more and more."

So why did he decide to include this duct-taped veteran in the UAV display? "I wanted it for all the kids who, like me, have built things like this."

OWEN EDWARDS *is a freelance writer and author of the book* Elegant Solutions.

Q&A

Israeli-born artist **ORI GERSHT** created traditional still-life arrangements—and then literally blew them up, capturing it all on video. His film *Pomegranate* is at the Hirshhorn's Black Box theater. Gersht spoke with Joseph Caputo.

In *Pomegranate*, still life explodes.

WHAT MAKES DESTRUCTION SO COMPELLING TO WATCH? Violence can be very grotesque and also intensely attractive. What interests me is how the two—beauty and violence—live side by side, and how moments can be created and erased almost simultaneously. Destruction is painful, but at times it can be very cathartic.

SO, DO YOU THINK THAT DESTRUCTION IS MORE INTERESTING THAN CREATION? One cannot exist without the other. This circle of existence is comprised of the two. Consider the bloody history of Europe: there was a great aspiration for high culture, yet this very same culture was shaped by brutality and barbarism.

IS YOUR WORK A COMMENTARY ON THE VIOLENCE WE SEE IN THE WORLD AROUND US? My work is not so much a direct commentary as it is an open-ended observation of the absurdities around us. I'm thinking about scenarios where, in one place, there is a very bloody war, while in another place people are living a comfortable, decadent lifestyle. I'm intrigued by that kind of parallel existence, and how one sometimes weaves into the other.

Visit Smithsonian.com/gersht for more conversation with artist Ori Gersht

MAKING HISTORY

WHAT'S IN A NAME? Brian Schmidt has a pet peeve about species named after their discoverers. "I don't find them descriptive of the specimen," says the research ornithologist at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History.

So when a bird he brought back from a forest in southwest Gabon, Africa, turned out to be a new species, he made sure it was given a proper name: *Stiphrornis pyrrholaemus*, which is Latin for "stout bird that bears a flame-colored throat." *Wired* magazine proclaimed the bird—more commonly known as the olive-backed forest robin—as one of the "Top Ten New Organisms of 2008." Two to three new bird species are formally registered each year. Most are found in remote areas of tropical South America and Asia, including Indonesia and the Philippines. Schmidt first observed the olive-backed forest robin in 2002, but it wasn't until he analyzed its DNA that he was sure it was a new species. At a time when climate change threatens to cause widespread extinction of flora and fauna, Schmidt sees larger meaning in the discovery of a new species. "If you don't know what you have, you don't know what you're missing," he says.

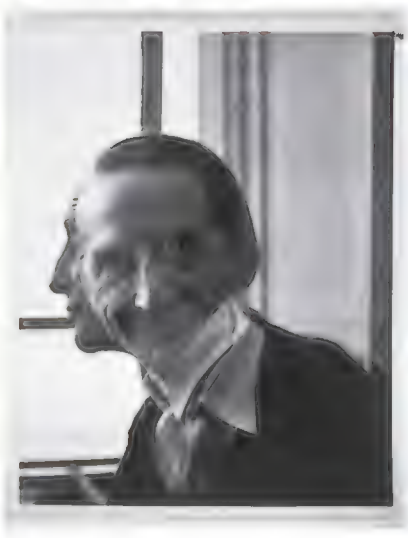
JOSEPH CAPUTO

ORI GERSHT / HIRSHHORN MUSEUM, SI (2); CARLTON WARD, JR. / SI

What's Up

TO AFRICA

Giraffes don't travel well, so 18th-century European naturalists had to sketch the statuesque African mammal (above: from 1804). The Smithsonian Libraries presents 40 drawings in "Art of African Exploration" on view at the Natural History Museum until August 16.



PROVOCATEUR

"I don't believe in art. I believe in artists," said Dadaist Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968). A National Portrait Gallery exhibit opening March 27 will showcase 100 images of the artist (above: a 1953 photo) who reinvented portraiture.

A IS FOR ADS

The 15th anniversary of the National Postal Museum is marked with an alphabet show of artifacts. For "P," the color proof (above: 1871) represents documentary revenue stamps that are nicknamed Persian rugs.

ALL GLITTER IS GOLD

Between the 7th and mid-19th centuries, Japanese artists infused gold and silver into their work. Thirty-two objects (including everyday items like the paper fan, above, made between the late 18th and early 19th centuries) shine at the Freer Gallery though May 10.

BY JOSEPH CAPUTO

GREENE DESIGN

At the Renwick Gallery until June 7, see what the renowned architect brothers Charles and Henry Greene dreamed up when lumber magnate Robert Blacker asked them to design his 1907 house and its furniture (left).

VISIT THE SMITHSONIAN For a free Associates' planning packet, call 202 633-1000 or 202 357-1729 (TTY), 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Or send an e-mail to info@si.edu. The Smithsonian Information Center in the Castle is open daily, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Members can visit the reception desk between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to register for a behind-the-scenes tour and to hear about membership benefits. Most museums are open daily, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. All museums are closed December 25.

Get an insider's look at the Smithsonian at Smithsonian.com/mallblog

NMNH, SI; VICTOR OBSATZ / PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART ARCHIVES / NPG, SI; NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM, SI; FREER GALLERY OF ART, SI; AMERICAN DECORATIVE ART 1900 FOUNDATION / SAAM

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Faith Ford

Faith Ford, Actress/Producer
Louisiana Native

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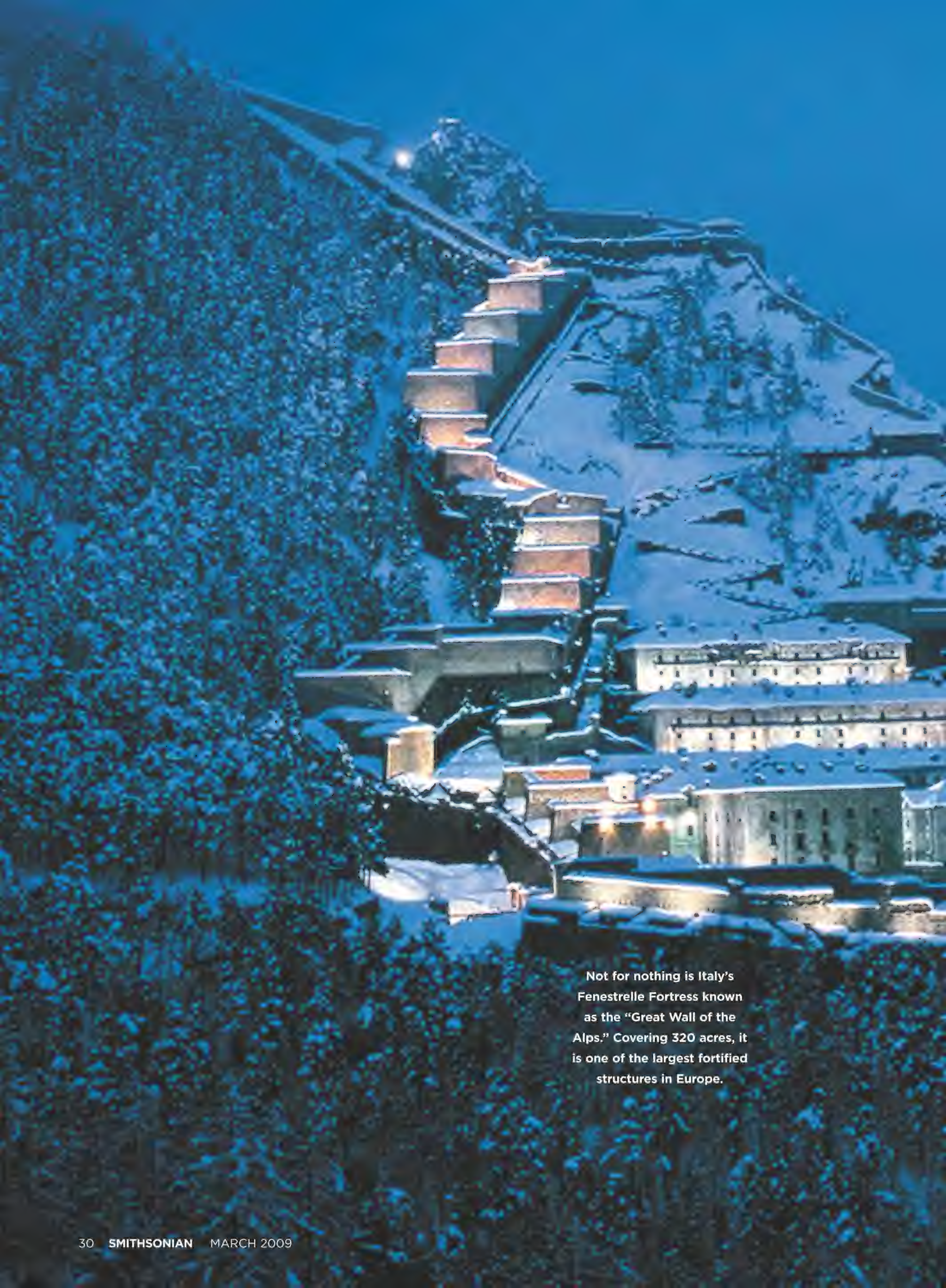

Not for nothing is Italy's Fenestrelle Fortress known as the "Great Wall of the Alps." Covering 320 acres, it is one of the largest fortified structures in Europe.

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10 MUST-SEE

ENDANGERED CULTURAL TREASURES

Some of the world's most precious historic and artistic sites can be visited today—but might be gone tomorrow

BY THE *SMITHSONIAN* STAFF

It took the Taliban only days to destroy 1,500 years of history.

The Buddhas of Bamiyan—two statues standing 120 and 175 feet high and hewn from the sandstone cliffs of central Afghanistan—had survived the wrath of Genghis Khan in the 13th century. But in March 2001 the Buddhas quickly succumbed to modern explosives detonated by a fundamentalist regime determined to erase all signs of idolatry.

W. L. Rathje, an archaeologist at Stanford University, described the destruction of the statues as a "crime against humanity." There was a universal recognition that the Taliban had deprived not only Afghanistan, but also the entire international community, of an irreplaceable piece of heritage.

Though the Bamiyan Buddhas represent a particularly heinous example, the onslaught against our common heritage, in one form or another, continues every day. Thousands of historical and artistic sites around the world are threatened by war, climate change, development projects or neglect. Groups such as the World Monuments Fund and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) try to halt the destruction. Sometimes they succeed. Too often they don't.

In this issue, SMITHSONIAN spotlights ten must-see endangered cultural sites, ranging from 20,000-year-old rock carvings in Australia to 20th-century Art Deco buildings along U.S. Route 66. Each testifies to our urge to build and create; each reminds us of how much we stand to lose.

FENESTRELLE FORTRESS, ITALY

The Great Wall of the Alps

VICTOR AMADEUS II was a heavyweight duke, leader of the longest-surviving royal line in Europe, the House of Savoy (established 1003). But in his day—the late 17th and early 18th centuries—the Continent was aflame with wars of nation-building, and it was his fate to rule a duchy caught in the crossfire between Louis XIV's France and the forces of England, Austria and other countries in a coalition of convenience known as the Grand Alliance. In both the Nine Years' War (1688-97) and the War of Spanish Succession (1701-14), Amadeus was very nearly dispossessed.

Yet the duke had a gift for self-preservation. In both wars he saved his seat by betraying his nominal allies (the Alliance in the first, the French in the second). By the time peace treaties were signed, he possessed an expanded domain, recognition among European powers as the King of Sardinia—and an appreciation of the idea that with great power comes great vulnerability. Thus his most enduring monument was defensive: the fortress of Fenestrelle, some 60 miles west of Turin on a ridge guarding the Chisone Valley, next to the modern-day skiing center of Sestriere in the Italian Alps.

Not for nothing is the fortress called the "Great Wall of the Alps." Covering 320 acres, it is one of the largest fortified structures in Europe: a collection of three major forts, plus supporting redoubts, ramparts, batteries, barracks, powder magazines, warehouses, kitchens, a governor's mansion, a parade ground and a church. The complex stretches almost two miles long, and it rises some 2,000 feet on its way to a peak that tops out at nearly 6,000 feet above sea level. Fenestrelle Fortress' most distinctive feature may be its 3,996-step stairway, which was roofed with stone to protect the troops from cannonballs and shield their movements from the enemy. A parallel open stairway of 2,500 steps—called the "royal" walk because Victor Amadeus' son and successor, King Charles Emmanuel III, was said to favor it—leads to the fortress' higher reaches on Mount Pinaia.

Construction began in 1728, two years before Victor

The complex (above: a church) stretches for nearly two miles.

MAP: GUILBERT GATES; STOCK ITALIA / ALAMY; PP. 30-31 ANDREA VETTORETTI, AFPT / ARCHIVIO FOTOGRAFICO PROVINCIA DI TORINO

At the Church of the Nativity, three rival Christian groups use their caretaking duties to maintain their claims to the basiilica.

Amadeus abdicated in favor of his son and four years before he died, at age 66. The work consisted mainly of cutting and reassembling the stone of the mountainside, and it continued until 1850. By then, the fortress was not only protecting the Chisone Valley, but also housing high-profile detainees: errant military officers, noblemen and clergy whose fortunes shifted with the political tides. "Fenestrelle is the Siberia of Italy," is how the 19th-century Catholic journal *The Rambler* summarized the experience of a cardinal who spent three and a half years in captivity there.

Siberia's chill winds, however, were reserved for inmates. Others could stroll in the alpine sunshine, taking in mountain views, which continue to charm. "It is impossible to visit the fortress without it having a profound effect on you, either from its historical perspective or just the sheer amount of labor that went into its construction," says Kent Benson, owner of a small company (ifhannibalhad.com) that organizes bicycle tours of the fortress. (A full tour, he says, takes eight hours—"You climb the equivalent height of two Eiffel Towers.")

The House of Savoy survived into the 20th century; Victor Amadeus' descendants ruled Italy as kings (even after Savoy was ceded to France in 1860) until the nation became a republic, in 1946. Decommissioned in 1947, the fortress succumbed to the ravages of time: pillaging of construction materials, erosion, water seepage and overgrowth.

Today, the fortress lies within the Orsiera Rocciavrè National Park. A local nonprofit group (to which Benson belongs) has been leading a conservation effort since 1990, and while it has brought the lower part of the fortress back to life, the magnitude of the complex and the relative remoteness of its upper parts present monumental financial and logistical challenges.

Restoration work on the lowest (and most accessible) fort, San Carlo, is about 80 percent complete, and cultural events are held there in summer. This past fall, an international architectural competition organized by the Province of Turin produced a plan to improve access to the site. But while the two upper forts, Tre Denti and Delle Valli, have been cleared of overgrowth, they remain exposed to the elements. Visitors may explore all three, taking either the covered staircase or following in Charles Emmanuel's footsteps on the royal walk, where they can contemplate the majesty—and hazards—of political power. T. A. FRAIL

CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, BETHLEHEM

Holy War

FEUDING MONKS at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem don't just cast the first stone—they stockpile rocks in anticipation of future altercations. Several holy men landed in the hospital two Christmases ago after a fight broke out over the dusting of church chandeliers. The occasional brawls at the 1,700-year-old basilica, believed to mark the birthplace of Jesus Christ, reflect the difficulty of housing three Christian denominations under a single roof.

And now that roof is rotting, threatening the structural

TARA TODRAS-WHITEHILL / AP IMAGES; MAP: GUILBERT GATES

The church, rebuilt circa A.D. 529, has survived invasions, rebellions and earthquakes.

integrity of the building. Parts of the wooden truss structure date to the 15th century, and holes in the timbers allow dirty water to drip upon the precious paintings and mosaics below. The problem has been worsening for decades, but the resident clerics—from the Greek Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox churches and the Franciscan order of the Roman Catholic Church—are jealous of each other's claims of custody and have been unable to agree on a plan of action. Despite the Palestinian Authority's recent effort to intervene, historians despair of saving the place.

"It is in the direst need of the greatest care," says Jaroslav Folda, a University of North Carolina professor emeritus of art history who studies the Crusader paintings on the basilica's red limestone columns. "This church is one of the holiest sites in Christianity. It is the victim here."

The fortresslike basilica is one of the oldest continuously operating churches in the world, having survived—some would say miraculously—various invasions, regime changes, fires, earthquakes and, most recently, the 2002 siege of Bethlehem, when armed Palestinians hid in the church from Israeli forces for weeks. Some wonder if the church has been spared only to be destroyed by the people who cherish it the most. The atmosphere of hostility "taints the holy place," says the Rev. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, a Roman Catholic priest who teaches archaeology at the École Biblique in Jerusalem.

Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, which controls Bethlehem, promised last November that his government would help organize a roof restoration effort and set up a fund for donations. But money isn't the issue. In fact, all three churches seem to want the historic privilege of picking up at least part of the tab, as a means of edging out the competition.

The Church of the Nativity was built around A.D. 330 by the first Christian Roman Emperor Constantine and was mostly destroyed—possibly during a Samaritan rebellion in A.D. 529—though parts of the original mosaic floor remain. Soon after, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian rebuilt the church in a bigger, grander fashion—largely the structure that remains today. In A.D. 614, the Persians, who razed many other churches during wars with Byzantium, spared the Church of the Nativity, supposedly out of respect for a mosaic of the Magi shown wearing Persian attire.

When the Crusaders conquered the Holy Land in 1099, they sent a force of 100 knights to guard the church; eventually, artists from this era embellished the building with their own mosaics and column paintings of saints, done in the rare encaustic method, with pigment suspended in wax.

Political control of Bethlehem has flip-flopped many times since. (The church's famous entrance, the four-foot-high "Door of Humility," was built not to make pilgrims bow but rather to repel looters on horse- and camel-back after the Crusades.) The question of which Christians had the rights to what parts of the church eventually got so tense that the Ottoman sultans, who ruled over Palestine from the 1500s through World War I, instigated an unwritten system now known as the Status Quo, which mandates that things be done as they were always done. Anyone who has previously processioned down a certain aisle, used a particular cupboard or hung a given tapestry has exclusive rights to that task or item.

However, if someone else manages to use or care for

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an object, ownership passes to them.

"You know, 'If you break it, you buy it'?" says Adam Porter, an associate professor of religion at Illinois College. "Well, this is, 'If you clean it, you own it.'"

The highly publicized fight at Christmas two years ago was essentially a territorial dispute. The Greeks were cleaning an Armenian-controlled part of the church, and custom dictated that they could dust the chandeliers by standing on a ladder set up in an appointed place. But the Greeks tried to move their ladder, encroaching on Armenian turf.

"Well," says Raymond Cohen, an international relations professor at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "they had to know this was like waving a red rag in front of a bull."

Religious officials in the region say that what seem like petty scuffles are part of a larger struggle.

"Our concern would be if we stood back and did not try to defend the rights of two billion Catholics," says the Rev. Garret Edmunds, a Franciscan friar who is the Vice Commissary of the Holy Land in Washington, D.C. and lives in Jerusalem for half the year. "Even things less consequential than replacing a roof, like cleaning a step, are important. If the [Greek Orthodox] were allowed to repair the roof without complaint or concern, 100 years from now they could say, 'In 2008, we paid for the roof and that is a sign of our ownership.'"

Cohen says the Palestinian Authority's intervention is a promising sign—not because of the funds it might raise, but because it represents outside leadership. He wrote a book about another charged restoration project at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which was badly damaged after a 1927 earthquake. With later supervision from the Jordanian government, the custodial churches were able to begin negotiations, which lasted a mere ten years.

"Do I think the repairs [to the Church of the Nativity] will happen in the near future? I don't, but you have to start somewhere," Cohen says. "Sometimes the behavior is so childish—you can't believe these are grown men. You've got to knock heads together and say, 'Guys, we're taking charge.'"

ABIGAIL TUCKER

CHAN CHAN, PERU

End of an Empire

DURING ITS HEYDAY, about 600 years ago, Chan Chan, in northern Peru, was the largest city in the Americas and the largest adobe city on earth. Ten thousand structures, some with walls 30 feet high, were woven amid a maze of passageways and streets. Palaces and temples were decorated with elaborate friezes, some of which were hundreds of feet long. Chan Chan was fabulously wealthy, although it perennially lacked one precious resource: water. Today, however, Chan Chan is threatened by too much water, as torrential rains gradually wash away the nine-square-mile ancient city.

Located near the Pacific coast city of Trujillo, Chan Chan

Once the capital of an empire that stretched across 600 miles of South America, Chan Chan was the largest adobe city on earth.

MAP: GUILBERT GATES; JOSÉ FUSTE RAGA / AGE FOTOSTOCK

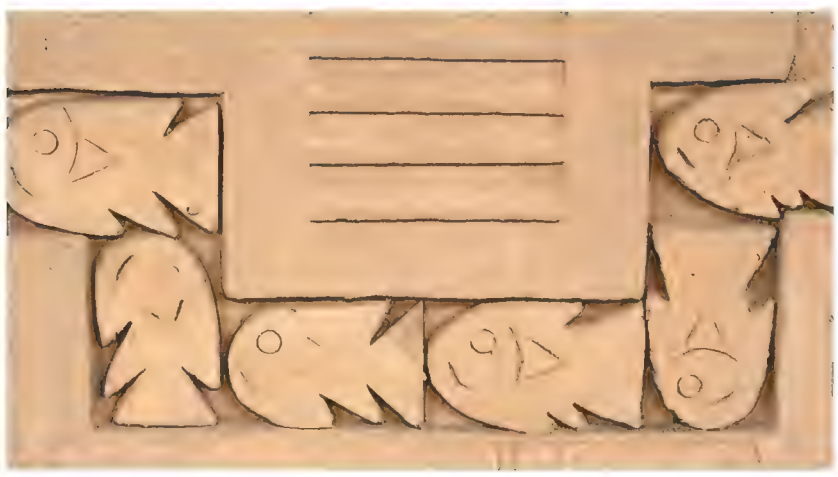
was the capital of the Chimú civilization, which lasted from A.D. 850 to around 1470. The adobe metropolis was the seat of power for an empire that stretched 600 miles from just south of Ecuador down to central Peru. By the 15th century, as many as 60,000 people lived in Chan Chan—mostly workers who served an all-powerful monarch, and privileged classes of highly skilled craftsmen and priests. The Chimú followed a strict hierarchy based on a belief that all men were not created equal. According to Chimú myth, the sun populated the world by creating three eggs: gold for the ruling elite, silver for their wives and copper for everybody else.

The city was established in one of the world's bleakest coastal deserts, where the average annual rainfall was less than a tenth of an inch. Still, Chan Chan's fields and gardens flourished, thanks to a sophisticated network of irrigation canals and wells. When a drought, coupled with movements in the earth's crust, apparently caused the underground water table to drop sometime around the year 1000, Chimú rulers devised a bold plan to divert water through a canal from the Chicama River 50 miles to the north.

The Chimú civilization was the "first true engineering society in the New World," says hydraulic engineer Charles Ortloff, who is based in the anthropology department of the University of Chicago. He points out that Chimú engineering methods were unknown in Europe and North America until the late 19th century. Although the Chimú had no written language for recording measurements or drafting detailed blueprints, they were somehow able to carefully survey and build their massive canal through difficult foothill terrain between two valleys. Ortloff believes the canal builders must have been thwarted by the shifting earth. Around 1300, they apparently gave up on the project altogether.

While erratic water supplies created myriad challenges for agriculture, the Chimú could always count on the bounty of the sea. The Humboldt Current off Peru pushes nutrient-rich water up to the ocean's surface and gives rise to one of the world's richest marine biomasses, says Joanne Pillsbury, director of pre-Columbian studies at Washington, D.C.'s Dumbarton Oaks, a research institute of Harvard University. "The Chimú saw food as the tangible love their gods gave them," Ortloff says. Indeed, the most common images on Chan Chan's friezes are a cornucopia of fish, crustaceans and mollusks, with flocks of seabirds soaring overhead.

The ocean's bounty was the most common theme on friezes.



Circular earthworks mark the center of the 510-foot-high "spiritual heart of

Chan Chan's days of glory came to an end around 1470, when the Inca conquered the city, broke up the Chimú Empire and brought many of Chan Chan's craftsmen to their own capital, Cuzco, 600 miles to the southeast. By the time Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro arrived around 1532, the city had been largely abandoned, though reports from the expedition described walls and other architectural features adorned with precious metals. (One of the conqueror's kinsmen, Pedro Pizarro, found a doorway covered in silver that might well have been worth more than $2 million today.) Chan Chan was pillaged as the Spaniards formed mining companies to extract every trace of gold and silver from the city.

Chan Chan was left to the mercy of the weather. "The Chimú were a highly organized civilization" and any water damage to the adobe-brick structures of Chan Chan "could be repaired immediately," says Claudia Riess, a German native who now works as a guide to archaeological sites in northern Peru. Most of the damage to Chan Chan during the Chimú reign was caused by El Niño storms, which occurred every 25 to 50 years.

NICHOLAS GILL / ALAMY

Ireland," now threatened by a seemingly unstoppable four-lane highway.

Now they occur more frequently. Riess believes that climate change is a primary cause of the increasing rainfall—and she's not alone. A 2007 report published by Unesco describes the erosion of Chan Chan as "rapid and seemingly unstoppable" and concludes "global warming is likely to lead to greater extremes of drying and heavy rainfall." Peru's National Institute of Culture is supporting efforts to preserve the site. Tentlike protective structures are being erected in various parts of the city. Some friezes are being hardened with a solution of distilled water and cactus juice, while others have been photographed, then covered to protect them. Panels with pictures of the friezes allow visitors to see what the covered artwork looks like.

Riess believes the best solution for Chan Chan would be a roof that stretches over the entire area and a fence to surround the city. But she acknowledges that both are impractical, given the ancient capital's sheer size. Meanwhile, the rains continue, and Chan Chan slowly dissolves from brick into mud. BRUCE HATHAWAY

PP. 36-37 THE IRISH IMAGE COLLECTION / CORBIS; MAP: GUILBERT GATES; PAULA GERAGHTY

THE HILL OF TARA, IRELAND

Where Kings Once Tread

"The harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled."

THE WORDS OF 19th-century Irish poet Thomas Moore still ring true, and the only music you're likely to hear around Tara nowadays is the clang of construction equipment. Several hundred acres of gentle green fields, marked by some lumps and bumps, cover this patch of County Meath in northeast Ireland. A nice place to lie down and watch the clouds scud by, perhaps, but is it any more remarkable than the rest of Ireland's lovely landscape?

Cinnte, to use an Irish expression of certitude. The archaeologically rich complex on and around the Hill of Tara is seen by many as the spiritual and historic heart of Ireland. It was the venue for rituals, battles and burials dating back to 4000 B.C. More than 100 kings were crowned at Tara, and St. Patrick is said to have stopped there to seek royal permission before spreading his message of Christianity.

In more recent history, the hill was the site of Daniel "the Liberator" O'Connell's 1843 "monster meeting," a massive political demonstration that rallied some 750,000 people to the cause of repudiating the country's union with Britain. Thousands of people still gather on its crest on midsummer's eve, both for the panoramic view and what one visitor calls "the sense you get there of being close to something holy."

"Tara is a part of the Irish psyche," says George Eogan, a retired Dublin archaeologist who led excavations near the hill in the 1960s. "Irish people, they know of Tara from their very early days. It's in schoolbooks and stories, even in primary school."

But Irish history now risks being consumed by the Celtic Tiger—the nickname given to Ireland's phenomenal economic expansion for more than a decade. Inevitably, a thriving

The new tollway will pass close to Rath Lugh, an earthen fort.

economy brought demands for an expanded infrastructure. And so, in 2003, the Irish government approved construction of a new four-lane tollway, the M3, to cut through the Tara complex. Construction began in 2005, and despite a storm of public protest, the project appears unstoppable.

"When it was proposed in 2000, most people nationally had no idea what was happening. And I think everyone trusted the government not to pick a route that was so damaging," says Vincent Salafia, a lawyer from nearby County Wicklow who founded the anti-M3 group TaraWatch in 2005. "There's fat land all around. We still can't quite figure out why they insisted on going so close to Tara."

Proponents of the M3 argue that the highway will improve life for tens of thousands of commuters who live northwest of Dublin and often spend hours each day creeping along traffic-clogged, two-lane roads into the capital city, about 30 miles away from Tara. Other proposed routes for that section of the M3 would have disturbed a greater number of private homes and farms. Proponents also note that the new road will be almost a mile away from the actual Hill of Tara, a 510-foot-high knoll.

Salafia: "An act of assault."

"If it doesn't go through the hill, then it's not damaging the site? That is the greatest bit of nonsense that I've ever heard," counters Eogan. "The Hill of Tara is only the core area of a much larger archaeological and cultural landscape."

Preservationists particularly worry that the M3 will slice between the Hill of Tara and Rath Lugh, an ancient earthen fort about two miles northeast thought to have been used to defend the hill. A smaller road already divides the two sites, but the M3 will run much closer to Rath Lugh, even removing part of the promontory it sits on. "If this development goes ahead, Rath Lugh will merely overlook, from a distance of 100 meters, a motorway—which would be a rather ignominious end for a once proud and important monument," a trio of archaeologists warned in a 2004 publication.

Much of the recent controversy has focused on the 38 new archaeological sites that construction teams have unearthed along the section of motorway closest to Tara since the project began. The discoveries represent centuries of human activity, including prehistoric settlements, Bronze Age burial mounds, a possible medieval charcoal manufacturing kiln and the remains of a 19th-century post office. At the time, the discoveries barely caused a hiccup—the artifacts were removed, and once the sites had been "preserved by record" in notes and photographs, they were destroyed. Ireland's National Roads Authority has pledged that any artifacts will eventually be deposited in the National Museum of Ireland.

While that approach may be legally permissible, that doesn't make it right, says Salafia, who examined one of the exposed trenches at a site just north of Tara. "You could see a child's body where [construction teams] had actually cut off the nose and toes, and also shaved off the top of a cremation urn, leaving the ashes exposed," he says. Eogan calls it "an act of sheer vandalism."

The M3 is scheduled for completion in 2010, though the global recession may delay it. In the meantime, Tara is attracting increased international attention, and is under consideration to become a Unesco World Heritage Site.

"Most of the endangered sites around the world are suffering due to neglect and climate change," Salafia says. "But this is an act of assault—premeditated assault, if you will—by the very people who are given the job of taking care of it."

AMANDA BENSEN

Hasankeyf is home to thousands of human-made caves, hundreds of medieval

THE CITY OF HASANKEYF, TURKEY

A Sunken Treasure?

THE WATERS OF THE Tigris River gave rise to the first settlements of the Fertile Crescent in Anatolia and Mesopotamia—the cradle of civilization. The ancient city of Hasankeyf, built on and around the banks of the river in southeastern Turkey, may be one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in the world, spanning some 10,000 years. Hasankeyf and its surrounding limestone cliffs are home to thousands of human-made caves, 300 medieval monuments and a unique canyon ecosystem—all combining to create a beguiling open-air museum.

But the city, along with the archaeological artifacts still buried beneath it, is slated to become a sunken treasure. Despite widespread protests from local authorities, archaeologists, architects, preservationists and environmental groups, the massive hydroelectric Ilisu Dam is expected to be completed in 2013. The reservoir created by the dam will inundate the site's caves and flood most of its structures.

More than 20 cultures have left their mark at Hasankeyf. The first settlers probably lived along the Tigris in caves carved into the rock cliffs. (The ancient Assyrian name for the place was *Castrum Kefa*, meaning "castle of the rock.") The Romans built a fortress there circa A.D. 300 to patrol their empire's eastern border with Persia and monitor the transport of crops and livestock. In the fifth century A.D., the city became the Byzantine bishopric of Cephe; it was conquered in A.D. 640 by the Arabs, who called it *Hisn Kayfa*, or "rock fortress." Hasankeyf would next be successively ruled by the Turkish Artukid dynasty, the Ayyubids (a

monuments and a rich ecosystem—all of which will be inundated beneath 200 feet of water when Turkey builds its proposed Ilisu Dam.

clan of Kurdish chieftains) and the Mongols, who conquered the region in 1260.

Hasankeyf emerged as an important commercial center along the Silk Road during the early Middle Ages. Marco Polo likely passed over its once-majestic stone, brick and wooden bridge, built around 1116 (only two massive stone piers and one arch remain). In 1515, the city was absorbed into the Ottoman Empire and has since remained a part of modern Turkey.

Among the site's most important structures are the ruins of the 12th-century palace of the Artukid kings; the El Rizk Mosque, built in 1409 by the Ayyubid sultan Suleiman; and the 15th-century cylindrical Tomb of Zeynel Bey (the eldest son of Uzun Hasan, who ruled over the region for 25 years). The tomb is decorated with glazed blue and turquoise bricks in geometric patterns that suggest a significant artistic link between Central Asia and Anatolia.

"About 200 different sites will be affected by the Ilisu Dam," says Zeynep Ahunbay, a professor of architectural history at Istanbul Technical University. "But Hasankeyf is the most visible and representative of all, due to its picturesque location and rich architectural content. It is one of the best-preserved medieval sites in Turkey."

The consortium of German, Swiss, Austrian and Turkish contractors charged with erecting the Ilisu Dam has already begun constructing a bridge and service roads for the transportation of building materials. The 453-foot-high dam will hold back the waters of the Tigris just before it flows into Syria and Iraq, creating a massive 121-square-mile reservoir that will raise the water level in Hasankeyf more than 200 feet. The consortium and the Turkish government maintain that the dam will provide power and irrigation to the area, encourage local development and create jobs. And, they say, the reservoir will be a magnet for tourists and water sports.

Opponents counter that most of the electricity generated by the dam will go to the big industrial centers in the west of the country. They advocate developing alternative energy sources instead, such as wind and solar power, and promoting cultural and environmental tourism.

"The dam will bring only destruction for us," says Ercan Ayboga, a hydrologist at Bauhaus University in Germany and spokeman for the Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive, which was formed in January 2006. "There will be no benefit for the people of the region." The project will displace tens of thousands of residents and threaten hundreds of species, including the rare striped hyena and the Euphrates soft-shelled turtle. Moreover, Ayboga says, "We will lose cultural heritage on the highest level, not just local heritage, but world heritage."

In late 2008, the European members of the Ilisu Dam consortium put a six-month freeze on financing because the project failed to meet World Bank standards for environmental and cultural protection—thereby temporarily halting construction. For its part, the Turkish government has proposed moving 12 of Hasankeyf's 300 monuments to a newly created cultural park about a mile north of the city. But the plan has not mollified protesters. "It is totally impractical and technically impossible," says Ayboga. Many of the monuments are made from ashlar masonry, he notes, which are uniform stone blocks carefully sculpted to fit together; they cannot simply be taken apart and reassembled. The monuments would lose some of their original details as some blocks break and crumble, and recreating the proper alignment is difficult. "And the dramatic siting, the rock caves, the aspect of the river, all will be lost."

Professor Ahunbay agrees: "It is impossible to transfer and 'save' Hasankeyf at the same time. Many of the features of the old city were brought to light by excavation, yet there is still more to be revealed. One-third of the visible traces are still covered by rubble and earth."

Ahunbay takes the long view. "When the very short useful life of the dam is set against the long history of Hasankeyf and its potential to live for eternity," she says, "one without doubt must chose the survival of Hasankeyf." DIANE M. BOLZ

Among the site's most remarkable buildings is a 15th-century cylindrical tomb. Historian Ahunbay (below) says at least one-third of the old city has yet to be excavated.

JON ARNOLD IMAGES / DANITADELIMONT.COM; LYNSEY ADDARIO; P. 38 PATRICK BOLGER; PP. 38-39 DIETER TELEMANS / PANOS PICTURES; P. 39 MA

A 65-foot statue of Buddha (above) within one of 130 caves (below) in northwest China is threatened by erosion and earthquakes.

XUMISHAN GROTTOES, CHINA

Under the Gaze of Buddha

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, human settlement has been driven by three basic tenets: location, location, location. And the Xumishan grottoes—a collection of ancient Buddhist cave temples constructed between the fifth and tenth centuries A.D.—owe their existence to this axiom. Located in China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Xumishan (pronounced "SHU-me-shan") capitalized on its proximity to the Silk Road, the crucial trade artery between East and West that was a thoroughfare not only for goods but also for culture and religious beliefs. Along this route the teachings of Buddha traveled from India to China, and with those teachings came the cave temple tradition.

Hewed out of red sandstone cliffs—most likely by artisans and monks, funded by local officials and aristocrats—the Xumishan grottoes break into eight clusters that scatter for more than a mile over starkly beautiful, arid terrain. The construction of the approximately 130 grottoes spans five dynastic eras, from the Northern Wei (A.D. 386-534) to the Tang (A.D. 618-906). Although there are more extensive cave

temples in China, Xumishan "is kind of a new pearl that's very little known," says Paola Demattè, an associate professor of Chinese art and archaeology at the Rhode Island School of Design. Historical records offer scant details about the site, but clues can be found among inscriptions on cave walls—such as the devotional "Lu Zijing" from A.D. 848, in which "a Buddha's disciple wholeheartedly attends to the Buddha"—and steles (stone slabs), particularly three from the 15th century that recount a sporadic history of the caves.

One of the steles contains the first written reference to the name "Xumishan"—a Chinese-language variation of

PAOLA DEMATTÈ (2); MAP: GUILBERT GATES

"Mount Sumeru," the Sanskrit term for Buddhism's cosmic mountain at the center of the universe. Before the grottoes were carved, the site was known as Fengyishan. Nobody knows for sure when and why the mountain was renamed. Some have suggested that it was basically an exercise in rebranding, to make the site more compelling to pilgrims. Others, such as Harvard's Eugene Wang, an expert on Chinese Buddhist art, see no special significance in the name change, since Xumishan was a widely used Buddhist term by the time it became attached to the site.

Nearly half of the grottoes are bare and may have served as living quarters for monks. Wall paintings and statues decorate the rest, where influences from India and Central Asia are evident. Cave 33's square layout, with its partition wall punctuated by three portals and pillars that reach to the ceiling, resembles a temple style that emerged in India during the second or first century B.C. Central Asian influence can be seen in Cave 51's two-level, four-chambered, square floor plan and in its central pillar, a Chinese variation on the dome-shaped stupa that symbolizes the Buddha's burial mound.

Overlooking the landscape is a 65-foot Tang dynasty Buddha, seated in a kingly posture. The colossal statue represents Maitreya, the Buddha of the future. The concept of Maitreya is somewhat similar to Christian, Jewish and Persian Messianic traditions, says Demattè: "Once the historic Buddha passed away, there was this great expectation that another Buddha would come." Multiple depictions of Maitreya can be found throughout Xumishan's grottoes.

Designated a nationally protected cultural relics site by China's State Council in 1982, Xumishan's grottoes face severe threats from wind and sand erosion, unstable rock beds and earthquakes. According to Demattè, only about 10 percent of the caves are in good condition. Some are so damaged they hardly seem like caves at all; others are blackened with soot from previous occupation or have suffered from vandalism or centuries' worth of droppings from birds and other pests.

After archaeologists from Beijing University surveyed the caves in 1982, some restoration efforts, however misguided, were made. Cement was used to patch parts of the colossal Buddha and to erect an overhang above the sculpture, which was exposed after a landslide in the 1970s. (Cement is ill advised for stabilizing sandstone, since it is a much harder substance than sandstone and contains potentially damaging soluble salts.) To prevent vandalism, grated gates that allow tourists to peer through them have been installed at cave entrances. China's cultural heritage advisers have also started training the local authorities about proper conservation practices.

Even with these measures, it's hard to say what the future holds for Xumishan. Increased scholarly investigation of the site may help. "We need to carefully document every inch," Wang says, "to preserve the grottoes digitally because there's no way to physically preserve them forever." It's a sentiment that resonates with one of the Buddha's main teachings—everything changes. LYN GARRITY

The 2,400-mile highway "took us to places that we needed to be, not in a

HISTORIC ROUTE 66, U.S.A.

The Mother Road

WRITING ABOUT the Joad family's journey from the Dust Bowl of Oklahoma to the promised land of California in *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck famously called Route 66 the "mother road." But today it's more of an impoverished great-grandmother.

The 2,400-mile highway, which starts in Chicago and passes through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona before ending in Los Angeles, will turn 83 this year—and it's not aging gracefully. Derelict gas stations, restaurants and trading posts, often vandalized, line its rural stretches, their neon signs long since dimmed. Developers are bulldozing quirky motels to make room for generic high-rises. And in places where traffic was once so thick it took ten minutes for a pedestrian to cross the road, you can spread a cloth and have a picnic, says Michael Wallis, a leading advocate for the preservation of the route.

Soaring automobile sales, coupled with the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1921—which called for the networking of roads—provided the impetus for the highway. Cyrus Avery, an Oklahoma state highway official, and Springfield, Missouri,

MAP: GUILBERT GATES

literal sense, but a more philosophical sense," says curator Roger White.

entrepreneur John Woodruff mapped out Route 66's diagonal course based on existing trails blazed by Native Americans, explorers and soldiers. And though it wasn't the first or longest of its kind, Route 66 was the shortest, most temperate year-round stretch between the Midwest and the West Coast. During World War II, soldiers hitchhiked on it. After the war, Americans took to the highways as never before, and a distinctive roadside culture—diners, motor courts and kitschy tourist traps—grew up along Route 66 to cater to them.

"It became a stage on which Americans acted out their aspirations," says Roger White, curator of road transportation at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Dubbed the "Main Street of America" by Avery, it inspired Bobby Troup's song "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" (recorded by Nat King Cole and, later, the Rolling Stones), Jack Kerouac's beatnik bible *On the Road*, the 1960s television series "Route 66" and, most recently, Pixar's animated film *Cars*.

Route 66's popularity led to its downfall, with traffic swelling beyond its two-lane capacity. In 1956, legislation created the Interstate System, and over the course of three decades, five separate interstates bypassed segment after segment of Route 66. Its signature black-and-white shield markers were taken down, and in 1985, Route 66 was officially decommissioned.

But Route 66 would not go quietly. "I got tired of people talking about the road in the past tense," says Wallis, who, in 1990, wrote *Route 66: The Mother Road*, a seminal biography of the highway. Today, 85 percent of Route 66 remains drivable, and some businesses thrive among the casualties. Ted Drewes Frozen Custard stand is still serving up cones in St. Louis; Stanton, Missouri's Meramec Caverns still gives tours; and the famous Wigwam Motel in Holbrook, Arizona, still offers a night's stay in a 30- by 16-foot concrete wigwam. "It's a labor of love, these motels," says John Lewis, an owner of the Wigwam. "I don't think the guests fully realize the effort it takes to keep these things going."

Driving a stretch of the route between Albuquerque and Gallup in the late 1980s, New Mexico Senator Pete Domenici was saddened by the deteriorating filling stations and shuttered mom-and-pop stores. He introduced a bill to preserve the highway. Authorized in 1999, the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program has been involved with 86 projects, including the repair of Lewis' wigwams. But while the legislation authorized the program to receive up to $10 million over the course of its ten-year life span, actual appropriations have been averaging around $300,000 a year, which is reduced by more than half by the salaries of two staff members and travel and administrative costs. "It's done some wonderful things," says Kaisa Barthuli, the program's manager. "But folks are a little discouraged." And the ten-year preservation effort is scheduled to end this year. A proposal to extend the program is part of an omnibus bill that is not expected to pass. "We're keeping our fingers crossed," says Barthuli. "We have a lot more work to do."

Most supporters of the preservation of Route 66 agree that the highway needs money, awareness and a national voice that can speak and act on its behalf. The World Monuments Fund named Route 66 to its Watch List of endangered sites in 2008, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation included its motels on a list of "America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places" in 2007. Wallis and others, including representatives from the eight state Route 66 associations, are in the process of forming a national nonprofit called the Route 66 Alliance to help with fundraising.

"It's a tremendous cross section of American history along those 2,400 miles," says Barthuli. "If we lose those stories, we're really losing a sense of ourselves." MEGAN GAMBINO

Route 66's famed Wigwam Motel is in Holbrook, Arizona.

PP. 42-43 SAM ANTONIO; WALTER BIBIKOW / DANITADELIMONT.COM

DAMPIER ROCK ART COMPLEX, AUSTRALIA

Written in Stone

THE DAMPIER ISLANDS weren't always islands. When people first occupied this part of western Australia some 30,000 years ago, they were the tops of volcanic mountains 60 miles inland. It must have been an impressive mountain range back then—offering tree-shaded areas and pools of water that probably drew Aborigine visitors from the surrounding plains.

No one knows when people first started scraping and carving designs into the black rocks here, but archaeologists estimate that some of the symbols were etched 20,000 years ago. As far as the scientists can tell, the site has been visited and ornamented ever since, even as sea levels rose and turned the mountains into a 42-island archipelago. Today 500,000 to one million petroglyphs can be seen here—depicting kangaroos, ostriches and hunters carrying boomerangs—constituting one of the greatest collections of rock art in the world.

But the petroglyphs sit atop a rich source of iron close to Dampier Port, which handles the second-most freight of any Australian port. By some accounts, industrial projects have already destroyed a quarter of the site, and archaeologists warn that continuing development could wipe out the rock art entirely.

The oldest petroglyphs are disembodied heads—reminiscent of modern smiley faces but with owl-like eyes. The meaning of these and other older engravings depicting geometric patterns remains a mystery. But the slightly younger petroglyphs, depicting land animals from about 10,000 years ago, lend themselves to easier speculation. As with most art created by ancient hunting cultures, many of the featured species tend to be delicious. (You might try kangaroo meat if you get a chance—it's very lean and sweet.) Some of the more haunting petroglyphs show Tasmanian tigers, which went extinct more than 3,000 years ago. When the sea levels stopped rising, about 6,000 years ago, the petroglyphs began to reflect the new environment: crabs, fish and dugongs (a cousin of the manatee).

ON THE WEB

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HERSCHEL ISLAND
CANADA

CENTENNIAL BAPTIST CHURCH
ARKANSAS, U.S.A.

PORT CITY OF CORO
VENEZUELA

CHINGUETTI
MAURITANIA

FAMAGUSTA WALLED CITY
CYPRUS

Up to a million petroglyphs depict people, spiritual beings, animals and birds. The etchings, says archaeologist Sylvia Hallam (above right), help us appreciate "what it means to be human." They face destruction by industrial development.

Interspersed among the petroglyphs are the remains of campsites, quarries and piles of discarded shells from 4,000-year-old feasts. As mountains and then as islands, this area was clearly used for ceremonial purposes, and modern Aborigines still sing songs and tell stories about the Dampier images.

Archaeologists started documenting the petroglyphs in the 1960s and by the 1970s were recommending limits on nearby industrial development. Some rock art areas gained protection under the Aboriginal Heritage Act in the 1980s, but it wasn't until 2007 that the entire site was added to Australia's National Heritage List of "natural and cultural places of outstanding heritage value to the nation." That listing and various other protections now preclude development on about 100 square miles of the archipelago and mainland, or about 99 percent of the remaining archaeological site. Meanwhile, tourists are still welcome to explore the rock art freely, and talks are in progress to build a visitor center.

That may sound like success, but the iron ore mines, fertilizer plants, liquid natural gas treatment facilities and other industries on the remaining 1 percent of the site can still wreak a

lot of havoc. "The greatest impacts are not direct but indirect," says Sylvia Hallam, an archaeologist at the University of Western Australia who has studied the complex extensively. Acid rain from the gas facilities could etch away the rock art; roads, pipelines and quarries have damaged sites such as shell piles that help archaeologists interpret the petroglyphs; and—worst-case scenario—fertilizer plants can explode. A company building a new gas-processing plant recently received a permit to move rocks that host 941 petroglyphs. Relocating the ancient works of art prevents them from being bulldozed, but it also removes them from their archaeological context.

"The art and archaeology of the Dampier Archipelago potentially enable us to look at the characteristics of our own species as it spread for the first time into a new continent," says Hallam, and to study how people adapted to new landscapes as sea levels rose. But there's also meaning in the sheer artistry of the place. The petroglyphs, Hallam adds, allow us "to appreciate our capacity for symbolic activity—ritual, drama, myth, dance, art—as part of what it means to be human."

LAURA HELMUTH

ROBIN CHAPPLE; WORLD MONUMENTS FUND; P. 44 MAP: GUILBERT GATES; PP. 44-45 WORLD MONUMENTS FUND

VISOKI DECANI MONASTERY, KOSOVO

A Medieval Refuge

TIME STANDS STILL within the Visoki Decani Monastery, nestled among chestnut groves at the foot of the Prokletije Mountains in western Kosovo. Declared a World Heritage Site in 2004, Unesco cited the 14th-century abbey as an irreplaceable treasure, a place where "traditions of Romanesque architecture meet artistic patterns of the Byzantine world."

The Serbian Orthodox monastery represents, according to art historian Bratislav Pantelic, author of a book on Decani's architecture, "the largest and best-preserved medieval church in the entire Balkans." Construction of Decani, dedicated to Christ the Pantocrator, or ruler of the universe, commenced in 1327 under King Stefan Uros III Decanski. (The monastery also functions as his mausoleum; the king's coffin rests at the head of the altar.)

The monarch's son, Stefan IV, completed his father's monument and was also responsible for the defining glory of the building's interior: its Byzantine frescoes, several thousand in all. The wall paintings incorporate thousands of individual figures illustrating such themes as the life of Christ, the veneration of the Virgin and the succession of kings in Stefan III's dynasty. Some of the tableaux—the story of Genesis, the Acts of the Apostles and the Proverbs of Solomon—are unique to Byzantine painting. Created over a span of 15 years, the frescoes exist in a state of extraordinary preservation. "When you go in," adds Pantelic, "you see exactly what you would have seen in the mid-1300s. That's what is amazing."

Across the centuries, Pantelic says, the abbey was regarded as "an ancient holy place that transcended religious divisions." In recent years, however, Decani's fate has been darkened by the cycle of ethnic violence that has engulfed the region since the early 1990s. Kosovo's majority ethnic Albanians have long pressed for independence from Serbia. In 1998, then-Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic sent

"When you go in," says Pantelic, "you see exactly what you would have seen in the mid-1300s. That's what is amazing."

armed forces to crush the separatist movement. A campaign of NATO bombing, followed by the introduction of United Nations peacekeepers (a presence continued today), was required to end the bloodshed.

During the fighting, the monks of Decani, following centuries-old tradition, sheltered refugees of all ethnicities. Yet, Decani's symbolic significance as a Serbian Orthodox cultural monument has rendered the abbey vulnerable.

On March 30, 2007, the monastery was attacked with grenades, presumably thrown by ethnic Albanian insurgents. Fortunately, the damage was "negligible," according to Sali Shoshaj, director of the Kosovo office of Cultural Heritage Without Borders, a Swedish organization founded in 1995 to preserve and restore Balkan sites. At least one person, reports Shoshaj, has been arrested. The situation has stabilized to the point that Decani has reopened to visitors, he says. Local guides, fluent in many languages, lead tours into the church.

Today, the abbey is protected by a force of Italian U.N. peacekeepers, who respectfully stand guard outside its cobblestone courtyard. Decani must "remain intact as part of the Balkan heritage," says Pantelic. "It belongs to all of us." KATHLEEN BURKE

JAISALMER FORT, INDIA

The Golden Stronghold

JAISALMER FORT maintains a silent vigil in the far northwestern corner of Rajasthan, India's desert state. Although the local airport is closed to commercial traffic, nearly half a million visitors somehow make their way to the fortress each year, even though it sits uncomfortably close to a contested border with India's longtime adversary Pakistan.

The pilgrims follow a 400-mile-long road from Jaipur. They drive through fierce desert winds that blow all the way to Delhi. In summer, they endure 105-degree heat. They come to an area where, for the past 2,000 years, water has been in short supply.

They come because there is no other place on earth like Jaisalmer.

Built in 1156 by the Indian King Rawal Jaisal, the fort is on a site that legend says he chose on the advice of a wise local hermit. In the Indian epic poem the *Mahabharata*, the mystic tells Jaisal that the Hindu deity Lord Krishna had praised the spot—and therefore, a fort built there would be almost invisible to the king's enemies. Indeed, from 30 miles away, visitors see only a sheer golden cliff, rising nearly 25 stories from the desert floor. The walls, of rich yellow sandstone unique to Rajasthan's quarries, shimmer like a mirage.

Jaisalmer was once home to the Rajputs—a tribe of warriors and traders who, for centuries, prospered by levying taxes on the merchants who wound between Egypt, Persia and India. Prone to warring not only against outsiders but among

themselves, the Rajputs built a network of intricate fortresses to defend themselves and their accumulated wealth.

The fort's main gate, 60 feet tall and carved from Indian rosewood, has a crack that, according to legend, appeared when a Hindu saint crossed the threshold. Three concentric rings of sandstone walls open onto homes, stables and palaces that once housed Rajput kings. In contrast to the plain walls, these bear elaborate designs. Carvings of chariot wheels, fruit and flowers emerge from soft marble. Scalloped archways guard the walkways between buildings. Ornamented screens shade royal apartments.

"Rajput forts were not easy to build," says Vikramaditya Prakash, an architecture professor at the University of Washington. "The palaces and temples are filigreed in unbelievable detail." Although it has been generations since any Rajput kings ruled here, Jaisalmer Fort still houses some 2,000 residents, which makes it India's last "living fort." (India's other famous forts are abandoned, except for tourist guides.) This, too, draws visitors to Jaisalmer.

But as the visitors arrive at the ancient wonder, they encounter a modern controversy. During the past 20 years, the sandstone blocks of Jaisalmer Fort, immune to the elements for nearly a millennia, have begun to shift and crumble. And no one can agree why it's happening or who is to blame.

"The basic problem is the sewage system in the fort," says Luca Borella, who moved to Jaisalmer from France in 1994 and now owns a nine-room heritage hotel here. "The government built it quickly and without study." Borella says the sewage system leaks water directly into the fort's foundations. He and other residents have called upon the Indian government to repair it.

Jaisalmer's tourist boom has only made matters worse. According to local government estimates, the hotels, restaurants and shops that dot the historic ridges import nearly 50,000 gallons of water daily. This water then flows into the sewage system's already-overstressed open drains. Some international heritage foundations, such as the World Monuments Fund, are urging both tourists and residents to scale back their water use—especially public taps that dispense running water—if they want the fort to survive the next 1,000 years.

Asheesh Srivastava, a conservation architect with the Lucknow, India-based firm ANB Consultants, has surveyed Jaisalmer and agrees the sewage system needs to be redesigned. But he argues that global climate change is the primary culprit. "In an arid region that was not designed to face rainfall, we are now facing rainfall," says Srivastava. When Jaisalmer was built, the Thar Desert received six to

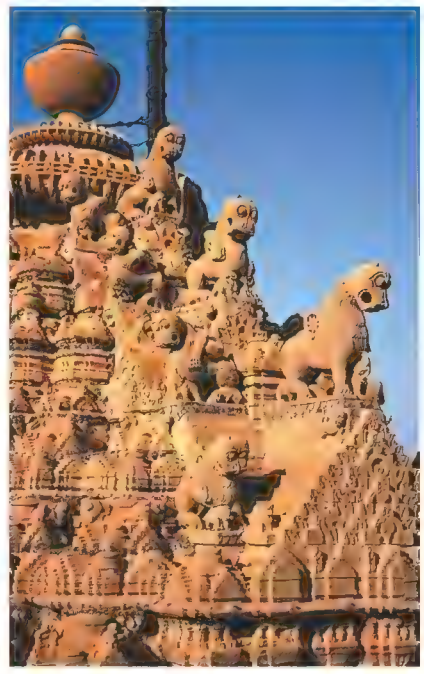
According to legend, a hermit chose where to build Jaisalmer (below), claiming the 12th-century fort would be invisible to enemies. The fort's interior, which has begun to crumble, boasts (right) a royal palace and filigreed temples.

P. 46 MAP: GUILBERT GATES; SIPA / NEWSCOM; PP. 46-47 RUSSELL GORDON / DANITADELIMONT.COM / ALAMY; P. 47 MAP: GUILBERT GATES

BERTRAND RIEGER / HEMIS / AFP PHOTOS; DAVID ELSE / LONELY PLANET IMAGES; PP. 48-49
JOHN HENRY CLAUDE WILSON / ROBERT HARDING WORLD IMAGERY / CORBIS

nine inches of rain per year. In the summer of 2007, 22 inches of rain fell in just three days. Although some would consider increased rainfall a blessing for such an arid region, it can be a headache for preservationists. When Raja Jaisal's workers built Jaisalmer in the 12th century, they topped many of the buildings with three feet of mud as insulation to keep interiors cool. Now the rains turn the roofs to sludge, which causes buildings to collapse.

Jaisalmer's slow decline became a matter of urgency on January 26, 2001, when a 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck near Jamnagar, a town in the coastal state of Gujarat, about 200 miles away. The tremors shook the foundations of the fort. "The buildings transfer load vertically," says Srivastava. "Every lateral movement damages the fortress."



After the quake, Srivastava and a team of engineers and surveyors from the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage went to the fort to assess the damage. The engineers rebuilt damaged outer walls with golden sandstone dug from nearby quarries and even employed the services of a camel to grind lime plaster with its hooves, according to the traditional method. To guard against damage from future tremors, they shored up weakened roof beams and inserted copper pins in the walls to protect against lateral thrust.

Srivastava and his group kept residents apprised of the restoration work through town meetings, but many Jaisalmer inhabitants remain dubious. Some fear the Indian National Trust will be satisfied only once all commercial activity at the fort has ceased. Others worry that the government might force them to relocate.

At the moment, Srivastava is working with another team to renovate the fort's largest structure, the granary. Built from four different types of stone, it once held enough grain to feed the fort's residents for 12 years. Once renovations are complete, local authorities hope to turn the granary into a spice museum where visitors can see samples of the pungent fenugreek, cumin and asafetida—still common in Indian cooking—that Rajputs added to food to preserve it. Other cultural projects, such as an amphitheater to showcase Rajput music, are also under consideration.

These initiatives will take time, but time is something this fort understands. For generations, it provided Rajput kings with a haven from their enemies and the harsh desert climate. Now it is up to residents, architects and heritage groups to protect it.

ANIKA GUPTA

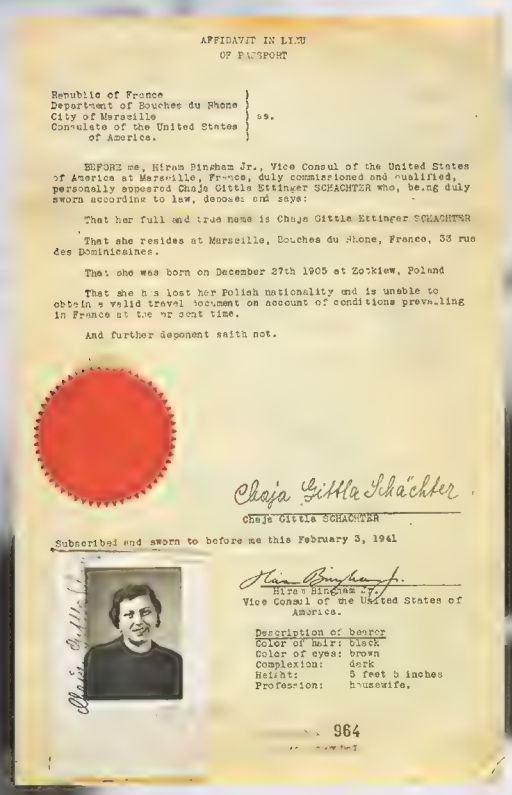
Bingham's List

As Jews in France tried to flee the Nazi occupation, an American diplomat named Harry Bingham defied his own government to speed them to safety

BY PETER EISNER

AN INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN GERMAN NOVELIST, Lion Feuchtwanger had been a harsh critic of Adolf Hitler since the 1920s. One of his novels, *The Oppermanns*, was a thinly veiled exposé of Nazi brutality. He called the Führer's *Mein Kampf* a 140,000-word book with 140,000 mistakes. "The Nazis had denounced me as Enemy Number One," he once said. They also stripped him of his German citizenship and publicly burned his books.

In July 1940, the Nazis had just occupied Paris, and southeastern France—where Feuchtwanger was living—was controlled by a French government with Nazi sympathies. As the French authorities in the south began rounding up the foreigners in their midst, Feuchtwanger found himself in a lightly guarded detention camp near Nîmes, fearing imminent transfer to the Gestapo. On the afternoon of Sunday, July 21,



AFFIDAVIT IN LIEU OF PASSPORT

Republic of France, Department of Bouches du Rhone, City of Marseille, Consulate of the United States of America. ss.

BEFORE me, Hiram Bingham Jr., Vice Consul of the United States of America at Marseille, France, duly commissioned and qualified, personally appeared Chaja Gittla Ettinger SCHACHTER who, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says:

That her full and true name is Chaja Gittla Ettinger SCHACHTER

That she resides at Marseille, Bouches du Rhone, France, 33 rue des Dominicaines.

That she was born on December 27th 1905 at Zolkiew, Poland

That she has lost her Polish nationality and is unable to obtain a valid travel document on account of conditions prevailing in France at the present time.

And further deponent saith not.

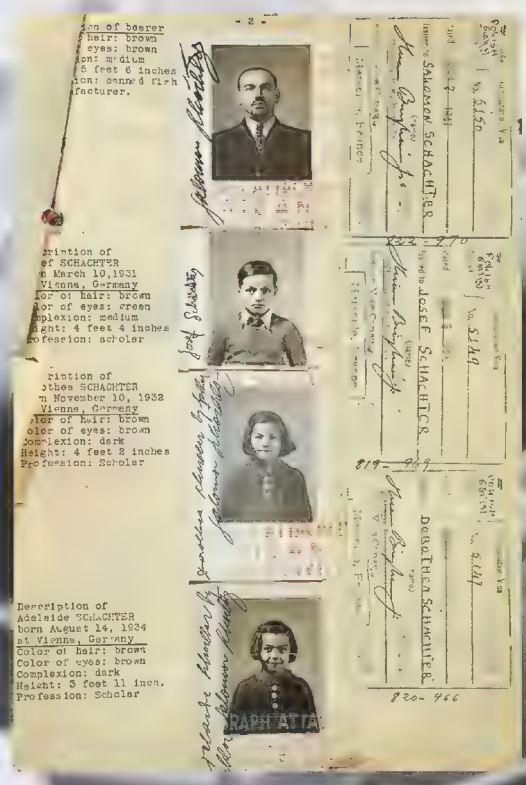
Chaja Gittla Schächter
Chaja Gittla SCHACHTER

Subscribed and sworn to before me this February 3, 1941

Hiram Bingham Jr.
Hiram Bingham Jr.
Vice Consul of the United States of America.

Description of bearer
Color of hair: black
Color of eyes: brown
Complexion: dark
Height: 5 feet 5 inches
Profession: housewife.

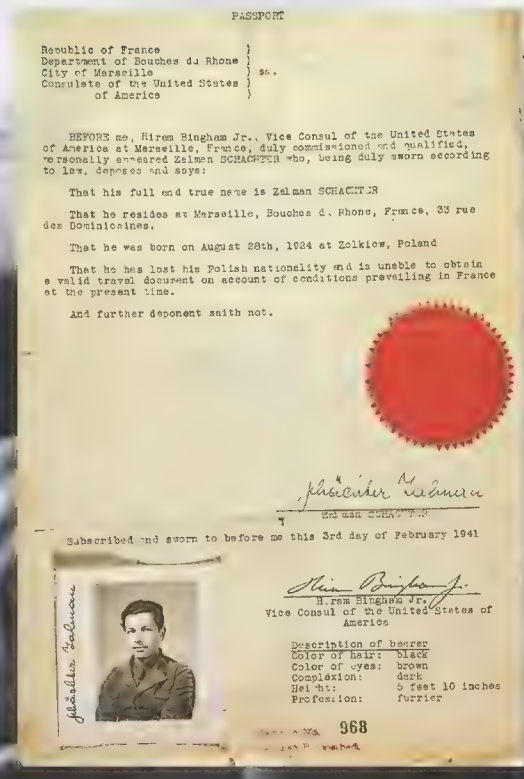
964



Description of
Adelside SCHACHTER
born August 14, 1924
at Vienna, Germany
Color of hair: brown
Color of eyes: brown
Complexion: dark
Height: 3 feet 11 inch.
Profession: Scholar

Description of
Josef SCHACHTER
born March 10,1931
at Vienna, Germany
Color of hair: brown
Color of eyes: green
Complexion: medium
Height: 4 feet 4 inches
Profession: scholer

Description of
Dothea SCHACHTER
born November 10, 1932
at Vienna, Germany
Color of hair: brown
Color of eyes: brown
Complexion: dark
Height: 4 feet 2 inches
Profession: Scholer



PASSPORT

Republic of France, Department of Bouches du Rhone, City of Marseille, Consulate of the United States of America. ss.

BEFORE me, Hiram Bingham Jr., Vice Consul of the United States of America at Marseille, France, duly commissioned and qualified, personally appeared Zelmen SCHACHTER who, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says:

That his full and true name is Zelmen SCHACHTER

That he resides at Marseille, Bouches du Rhone, France, 33 rue des Dominicaines.

That he was born on August 28th, 1924 at Zolkiew, Poland

That he has lost his Polish nationality and is unable to obtain a valid travel document on account of conditions prevailing in France at the present time.

And further deponent saith not.

Zelmen SCHACHTER

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 3rd day of February 1941

Hiram Bingham Jr.
H.ram Bingham Jr.
Vice Consul of the United States of America

Description of bearer
Color of hair: black
Color of eyes: brown
Complexion: dark
Height: 5 feet 10 inches
Profession: furrier

968

In just ten months, Bingham (in Marseille) provided aid, including travel documents (opposite), to some 2,500 Jewish refugees—thereby effectively ending his career.

he took a walk by a swimming hole where inmates were allowed to bathe, debating whether to flee the camp or wait for exit papers that the French had promised.

Suddenly, he spotted a woman he knew along the road to the camp and hurried over. "I have been waiting for you here," she said, shepherding him to a car. A few hours later, the novelist was safely in Marseille, enjoying the hospitality of a low-ranking U.S. diplomat named Hiram Bingham IV. Bingham, 37, was descended from prominent politicians, social

Bingham aided Lion Feuchtwanger (right) and tried to secure relief for detainees gathered in French camps (above: Gurs).

scientists and missionaries. His grandfather's book *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands* presaged James Michener's *Hawaii*. His father, Hiram Bingham III, was a renowned explorer and, later, a U.S. senator. After a prep school and Ivy League education, Hiram, known as Harry, seemed destined for a brilliant career in the Foreign Service.

But as World War II approached, Bingham made a series of life-altering choices. By sheltering Feuchtwanger in his private villa, Bingham violated both French law and U.S. policy. To draw attention to hunger and disease in the French camps, he challenged indifference and anti-Semitism among his State Department superiors. In speeding up visa and travel documents at the Marseille consulate, he disobeyed orders from Washington. In all, an estimated 2,500 refugees were able to flee to safety because of Bingham's help. Some of his beneficiaries were famous—Marc Chagall, Hannah Arendt, Max Ernst—but most were not.

Bingham accomplished all this in a mere ten months—until the State Department summarily transferred him out of France. By the end of World War II, his hopes of becoming an ambassador had been dashed. At the age of 42, after more than ten years in the Foreign Service, he moved with his wife and growing family to the farm they owned in Salem, Connecticut, where he spent the rest of his days painting landscapes and Chagallesque abstracts, playing the cello and dabbling in business ventures that never amounted to much.

When Bingham died there in 1988, at 84, the stories about his service in Marseille remained untold. William Bingham, 54, the youngest of his 11 children, says he and his siblings "never knew why his career had soured." But after their mother, Rose, died in 1996, at 87, they found out.

While cleaning out a dusty closet behind the main fireplace in the 18th-century farmhouse, William discovered a tightly bound bundle of documents that outlined his father's wartime service. Thus began a campaign to vindicate his father. And as his rescue efforts came to light, he was embraced by the same government that had cast him aside.

Feuchtwanger spent the summer living secretly at Bingham's villa, where the writer overheard Harry arguing on the phone with his superiors.

HIRAM BINGHAM IV WAS born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on July 17, 1903. His mother, Alfreda Mitchell, was a granddaughter of Charles L. Tiffany, the founder of Tiffany & Co. Harry's father, Hiram Bingham III, had no interest in following his parents as Protestant missionaries in the South Pacific. Starting in 1911, he led a series of expeditions to Machu Picchu in the Peruvian Andes; his travelogue, *Lost City of the Incas,* made him world-renowned. After his South American adventures, the senior Bingham entered the Army in 1917 as an aviator, achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel and was a flight instructor in France. A Republican, he served Connecticut as lieutenant governor and U.S. senator, and he was chairman of the McCarthy-era Civil Service Commission Loyalty Review Board.

His seven sons vied to impress him. Harry, the second eldest, and his brother Jonathan (who would become a Democratic congressman from New York) attended the Groton School in Massachusetts, whose illustrious alumni included Franklin D. Roosevelt. Harry had a bookish appearance but excelled at tennis, football, gymnastics and other sports.

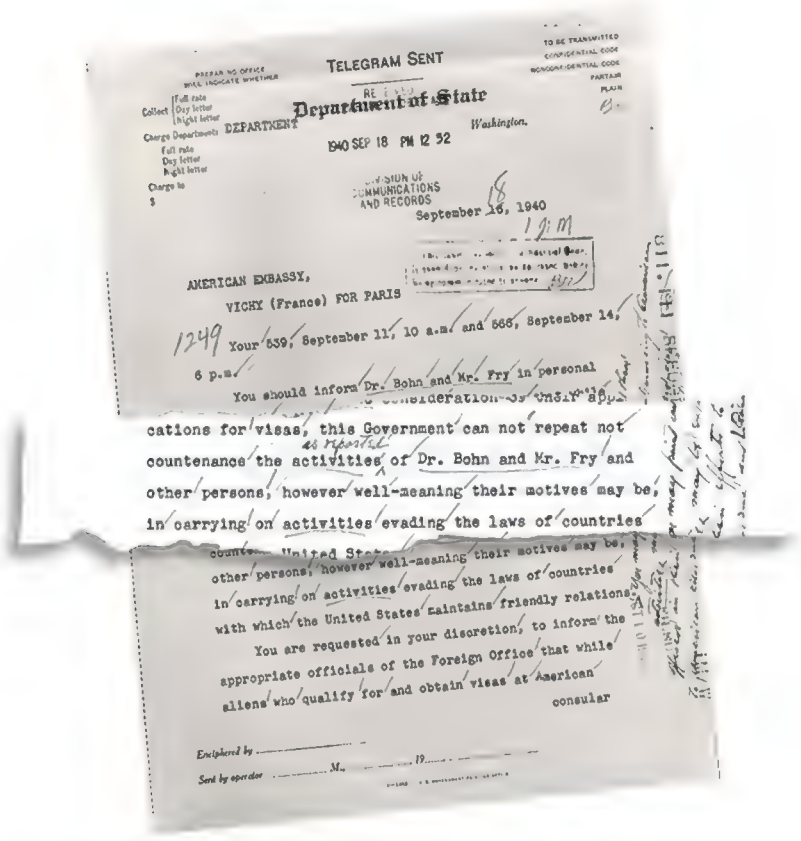
Those who knew Harry said he spoke with animation and conviction after overcoming an initial reserve. Family members recalled that he always defended younger students from bullying upperclassmen. His brothers sometimes considered him pompous, perhaps too serious. His schoolmates called him "righteous Bingham."

Harry shared his father's wanderlust. After graduating from Yale University in 1925, he went to China as a civilian U.S. Embassy employee, attended Harvard Law School and

USHMM, COURTESY OF HANNA MEYER-MOSES; SASHA / GETTY IMAGES; P. 50 USHMM, COURTESY OF JOSEPH SCHACHTER (3); PP. 50-51 USHMM, COURTESY OF HIRAM BINGHAM

then joined the State Department, which posted him to Japan, London (where he met Rose Morrison, a Georgia debutante, whom he soon married) and Warsaw before transferring him, at age 34, to Marseille in 1937.

Europe was careering toward war, but the first few years of Bingham's assignment seem to have been routine enough—other than a chilling visit he paid to Berlin after Hitler rose to power in 1933. In a rare reminiscence recorded by a teenage granddaughter for a school project in the



TELEGRAM SENT

Department of State

Washington.

1940 SEP 18 PM 12 52

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

September 16, 1940

AMERICAN EMBASSY,
VICHY (France) FOR PARIS

1249 Your 639, September 11, 10 a.m. and 666, September 14, 6 p.m.

You should inform Dr. Bohn and Mr. Fry in personal [illegible] cations for visas, this Government can not repeat not countenance the activities as reported of Dr. Bohn and Mr. Fry and other persons, however well-meaning their motives may be, in carrying on activities evading the laws of countries with which the United States maintains friendly relations. You are requested in your discretion, to inform the appropriate officials of the Foreign Office that while aliens who qualify for and obtain visas at American consular

In 1940, Secretary of State Cordell Hull warned the Marseille consulate not to aid Americans there who wanted to help Jews leave France. U.S. policy was to limit immigration severely, for fear that German spies would be among the visa applicants.

1980s, Bingham said he and Rose had been repulsed when they "had seen the broken windows where the Jewish stores had all been smashed and there were signs in the restaurants, 'No Jews or Dogs Allowed.' "

In June 1940, the *Wehrmacht* invaded France by land and air. Bingham sent his pregnant wife and their four children back to the United States, but he himself seemed aloof from the danger. "Two more air raids," he wrote on June 2 as he watched *Luftwaffe* attacks on Marseille. "Thrilling dive bombing over port . . . several hangars damaged and two other ships hit." Everyone at the embassy was "very excited about the raids," he noted. Then he headed off to his club for three sets of tennis, only to be disappointed when one match was "called off as my opponent did not show up."

But over the course of a week—as more bombs fell, as he read news of the Germans' overrunning of Belgium and Holland, as refugees poured into Marseille—Bingham's jottings took on a more urgent tone: "Long talk with a Belgian refugee from Brussels who told pitiful story of harrowing experiences during the last days in Brussels and flight to France," he wrote on June 7. "Noise of sirens and diving planes terrorized them . . . men crying Heil Hitler made human bridges for advancing troops, piles of corpses 5 feet high."

Bingham also worried that "the young Nazis [were] warped and infected with a fanaticism which may make them impossible to deal with for years." He added: "Hitler has all the virtues of the devil—courage, persistence, stamina, cunning, perseverance."

After taking Paris on June 14, 1940, Hitler divided France into an occupied zone and a state to the south that became known for its new capital, Vichy. Tens of thousands of European refugees had been corralled in squalid internment camps throughout southern France; Hitler obliged the Vichy government to hold the refugees until German intelligence units could investigate them. As more refugees streamed into southern France, thousands got as far as Marseille and hundreds lined up at the U.S. Consulate at Place Félix-Baret to beg for documents that would allow them to leave. But the de facto U.S. policy was to stall.

In Washington, James G. McDonald, head of the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees, supported pleas from Jewish leaders and others that the United States admit refugees in large numbers. But Breckinridge Long, an assistant secretary of state and head of the Special War Problems Division, opposed that view. Xenophobic and quite possibly anti-Semitic, Long shared a widespread if unfounded fear that German agents would be infiltrated among the visa applicants. In a 1940 memorandum, he wrote that the State Department could delay approvals "by simply advising our consuls to put every obstacle in the way . . . which would postpone and postpone and postpone the granting of the visas."

As a result, most American consulates in Europe interpreted immigration rules strictly. In Lisbon, "they are very reluctant to grant what they call 'political visas,' that is, visas to refugees who are in danger because of their past political activities," wrote Morris C. Troper, chairman of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, in 1940. "Pretty much the same situation prevails in the American Consulate in Marseille," he went on, "although one of the viceconsuls there, Mr. Hiram Bingham, is most liberal, sympathetic and understanding."

Bingham had, in fact, silently broken ranks. "[I] was getting as many visas as I could to as many people," he told his granddaughter—in a conversation that most family members would hear only years later. "My boss, who was the consul general at that time, said, 'The Germans are going to win the war. Why should we do anything to offend them?' And he didn't want to give any visas to these Jewish people."

THE CASE OF LION FEUCHTWANGER, Bingham's first rescue operation, had come about because the first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, asked the State Department to issue

PETER EISNER *has written three books, including* The Freedom Line, *about the rescue of Allied airmen shot down over Europe.*

ROBERT KIM BINGHAM COLLECTION (2)

him an exit visa after Feuchtwanger's editor in the United States informed her of his plight. But while staying at Bingham's villa, the novelist overheard his host arguing over the telephone with his superiors and realized that in hiding him, Bingham had acted on his own. As Bingham searched for a way to get Feuchtwanger safely out of the country, he hid him all through the summer of 1940. By August, an organization called the Emergency Rescue Committee had been established in New York City; once again Feuchtwanger benefited from Eleanor Roosevelt's patronage. In meetings with her, Rescue Committee members developed a list of prominent exiles to be helped. They then sent American journalist Varian Fry to Marseille as their representative. Fry, whose efforts to help some 2,000 refugees escape from France would eventually be well chronicled and widely honored, quickly contacted Bingham.

Those Bingham helped included the unknown and the well-known (clockwise from top: Max Ernst, Hannah Arendt and Marc Chagall).

Bingham issued the novelist a false travel document under the name "Wetcheek," the literal translation of Feuchtwanger from the German. In mid-September 1940 "Wetcheek" and his wife, Marta, left Marseille with several other refugees; he made his way to New York City aboard the SS *Excalibur*. (His wife followed on a separate ship.) When Feuchtwanger disembarked on October 5, the *New York Times* reported that he spoke "repeatedly of unidentified American friends who seemed to turn up miraculously in various parts of France to aid him in crucial moments in his flight." (Feuchtwanger settled in the Los Angeles area, where he continued to write. He died in 1958, at the age of 74.)

The State Department, of course, knew precisely who Feuchtwanger's American friends were. Soon after the writer left Marseille, Secretary of State Cordell Hull wired the U.S. Embassy at Vichy: "[T]his Government can not repeat not countenance the activities as reported of . . . Mr. Fry and other persons, however well-meaning their motives may be, in carrying on activities evading the laws of countries with which the United States maintains friendly relations."

Bingham's boss in Marseille, Consul General Hugh Fullerton, advised Fry to leave the country. Fry declined. For his part, Bingham surreptitiously broadened his work with Fry—setting him up, for example, with a police captain who was sympathetic to escape operations. The vice consul "had no hesitation to work with Fry," says Pierre Sauvage, a filmmaker who is gathering material for a documentary on Fry's work in Marseille. "If Bingham could find a way of bending the rules, of being accommodating to somebody who wanted to get out, he did that."

"You felt so safe there in the consulate when he was there," one of Bingham's beneficiaries said. He "looked like an angel, only without wings."

Through the summer of 1940, Bingham also gave secret shelter to Heinrich Mann, brother of novelist Thomas Mann; the novelist's son, Golo, also left Europe with Bingham's help. Both "have repeatedly spoken to me about your exceptional kindness and incalculable help to them in their recent need and danger," Thomas Mann wrote Bingham on October 27, 1940. "My feeling of indebtedness and gratitude to you is very great."

Bingham also visited Marc Chagall, a Jew, at Chagall's home in the Provençal village of Gordes and persuaded him to accept a visa and flee to the United States; their friendship continued for the rest of their lives. At the consulate, Bingham continued to issue visas and travel papers, which in many cases replaced confiscated passports. Fred Buch, an engineer from Austria, received an exit visa and temporary travel documents; he left Marseille with his wife and two children and settled in California. "God, it was such a relief," Buch told Sauvage in a 1997 interview. "Such a sweet voice. You felt so safe there in the consulate when he was there. You felt a new life will start." Bingham "looked like an angel, only without wings," Buch added. "The angel of liberation."

State Department files show that Bingham issued dozens of visas daily, and many other elements of his work—sheltering refugees, writing travel papers, meeting with escape groups—were not always recorded. "My father had to keep what he was doing secret, but I think people suspected it," says William Bingham. "From his perspective, what

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he was doing by defying the direct orders [of his own government] was complying with international law."

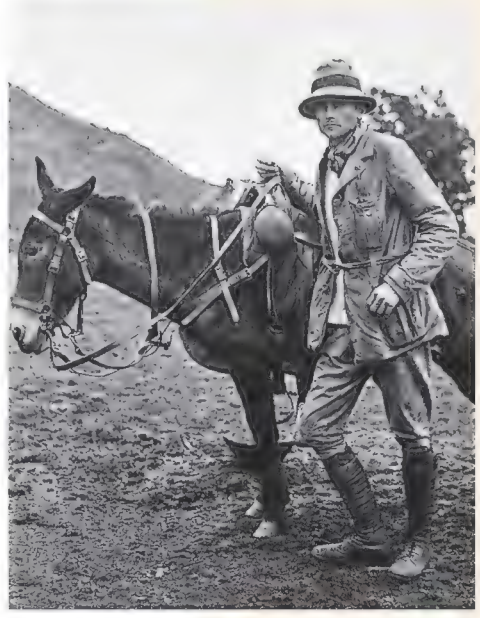
Bingham's next act, however, was even more provocative: with winter approaching, he began pressing for U.S. support for relief efforts at the detention camps around Marseille.

IN 1940, there were about two dozen such camps in Vichy France, many of them having been originally set up in the 1930s for émigrés from Spain during the Spanish Civil War. Even before the Nazis took Paris that June, French authorities ordered European foreigners to report for internment on the ground that the criminals, spies and anti-government operatives among them had to be weeded out. From November 27 to December 1, Bingham visited camps at Gurs, Le Vernet, Argelès-sur-Mer, Agde and Les Milles, accompanied by an official who was coordinating the work of 20 international relief organizations in Marseille.

French authorities actually welcomed such relief missions, because local officials lacked the infrastructure and supplies to care for the inmates adequately. In a report Bingham wrote of his travels, he cited "immigration problems" as the reason for his trip, but his account portrays a gathering tragedy for the 46,000 camp inmates. Gurs, one of the largest camps, he wrote, held about 14,000 people, including 5,000 women and 1,000 children, and many of the detainees were diseased, malnourished or badly housed. Three hundred inmates had died there in November, 150 in the first ten days of December. "When the shortage of food becomes more acute, the camps may be used as centers of unrest," Bingham wrote. "Resulting riots may be used if desired as an excuse for intervention and military occupation of the whole of France."

When Bingham's report was forwarded to Secretary of State Hull on December 20, 1940, it was preceded by a caveat from Bingham's boss, Consul General Fullerton: "Mr. Bingham's trip to the camps was in nowise official and under instructions from the Department of State," Fullerton had written. "It was, in fact, made at his own expense."

In Washington, immigration policy remained unchanged. Later that month, Eleanor Roosevelt wrote to the State Department to ask what could be done about France's refugee crisis; she may not have seen Bingham's report, but she was still in close communication with the Emergency Rescue Committee. On January 10, Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles blamed the French: "The French government has been unwilling or has failed to grant the required exit permits with the consequence that these persons have not been able to proceed to the United States and remain on French territory where they must be cared for and fed," he wrote, then added pointedly: "I believe, despite some critics who are not aware of the facts, the machinery we have set up to deal with the emergency refugee problem is functioning effectively and well."



Bingham (in Peru in 1911) wrote of a "jungle-covered maze."

GRANGER COLLECTION, NEW YORK

IN DISPUTE

Did Hiram Bingham III "discover" Machu Picchu?

HARRY BINGHAM'S FATHER'S CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT was his exploration of Machu Picchu almost 100 years ago. Yet Hiram Bingham III's status as the "discoverer" of the ruins is in dispute, and the Peruvian government has demanded that Yale University, where Bingham taught, return all the artifacts he took home from Inca lands.

Bingham's persistent search for the fabled Incan capital culminated on July 24, 1911. Weary from hiking for hours, directed by a friendly pair of local farmers, he marched into the mountains accompanied by a local guide and a Peruvian policeman until "suddenly we found ourselves in the midst of a jungle-covered maze of small and large walls," he wrote in an account published in *Harper's Monthly* in April 1913.

"Surprise followed surprise until there came the realization that we were in the midst of as wonderful ruins as any ever found in Peru," he wrote. He had come upon Machu Picchu ("old peak" in Quechua). While there was evidence of graffiti left by a local mule driver, he added, "It is possible that not even the conquistadors ever saw this wonderful place."

Bingham's chronicle brought him acclaim ("The greatest archaeological discovery of the age," the *New York Times* called it), but now archaeologists in Peru contend that he was not the first outsider to come upon the 15th-century Incan city's ruins, as well he should have known.

"The presence of several German, British and American explorers is recognized, and that they had drawn up maps," says Jorge Flores Ochoa, a Peruvian anthropologist. Bingham "had more academic knowledge. . . . But he was not describing a place that was unknown."

The contention is not new. For example, in a September 8, 1916, letter to the *Times*, German mining engineer Carl Haenel said he had accompanied the explorer J.M. von Hassel to the area in 1910, though he offered no documentation of such a journey. But even Bingham admitted that "it seemed almost incredible that this city, only five days' journey from Cuzco, should have remained so long undescribed and comparatively unknown."

Richard L. Burger, a professor of anthropology at Yale, where Bingham taught Latin American history from 1907 to 1915, says he's skeptical of the Peruvian assertions. If others did visit, he says, they either came to pillage or didn't recognize the site's importance. Besides, he adds, Bingham "never claimed to have been the first modern person to have set foot in Machu Picchu." In Peru, some people have called Bingham the "scientific discoverer of Machu Picchu," Burger says. "I think that is fairly accurate."

Yale, for its part, is embroiled in a dispute with the government of Peru over the artifacts and bones that Bingham brought home. In 2007, the university agreed to return most of them in exchange for keeping some for further research. In a lawsuit filed last December in federal court, however, the government of Peru said Yale must return the entire collection.

Thomas Conroy, a Yale spokesman, said the university respects Peru's interests. "We still have the same goal, to seek an ongoing collaboration which reflects Peru's interest in the material and the rest of the world's interest," Conroy says. "And Yale does think such an agreement could serve as a model or an example of how [similar] disputes could be settled."

PETER EISNER

But Bingham, despite the State Department's reluctance, continued to work with relief organizations outside the government. With his help, Martha Sharp of the Unitarian Service Committee and others assembled 32 refugees, including 25 children, and got them onto a ship that arrived in New York, on December 23.

Robert C. Dexter, a director of the Boston-based committee, wrote to Hull to commend "the sympathetic and understanding way in which Vice-Consul Hiram Bingham, Jr. carried out his responsibilities at the consulate. . . . Mrs. Sharp reports that his whole conduct made other Americans proud of the way he represents their government to foreigners coming before him for assistance."

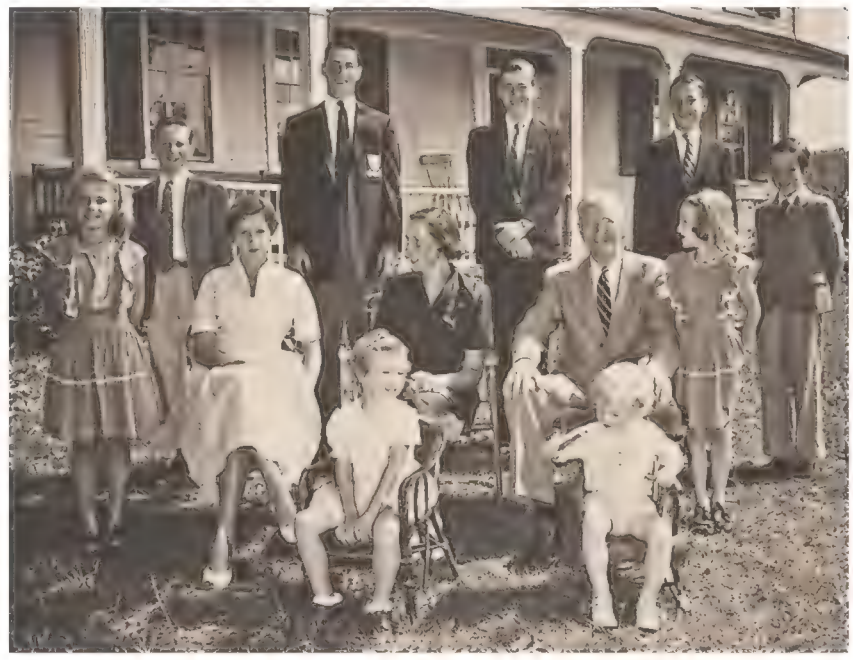
Breckinridge Long, the assistant secretary of state who had been adamant about closing the gates to immigrants, replied that "the Department is always glad to learn that its officers abroad are proving themselves of service to American citizens and their interests." Long's tepid response reflected growing concern among Bingham's superiors about his activities. "In general, Bingham was stretching the boundaries," says historian Richard Breitman, who has written extensively on the period. "Bingham was on one side, and Long and the majority of consuls were on the other side."

In the winter of 1941, one of Bingham's Marseille superiors, William L. Peck, wrote a memo describing Peck's efforts to give humanitarian consideration "to aged people, especially those in the camps. These are the real sufferers and the ones who are dying off." He then added: "The young ones may be suffering, but the history of their race shows that suffering does not kill many of them. Furthermore, the old people will not reproduce and can do our country no harm, provided there is adequate evidence of support." Such an expression of anti-Semitism within the government, which was forwarded to the secretary of state, as well as to the consulates in Lyon and Nice, was not unusual during the war, Breitman says; overt anti-Semitism did not recede until the Nazi concentration camps were liberated in 1945 and the true dimensions of the Holocaust began to emerge.

Although Bingham left no record that he sensed any trouble, his time in Marseille was running out. In March 1941, Long effectively silenced McDonald's pleas for a more open immigration policy; in official Washington sentiment for aiding refugees evaporated.

In April, Bingham was delegated to accompany the new U.S. ambassador to Vichy, retired Adm. William D. Leahy, during Leahy's official visit to Marseille. Nothing gave any indication of tensions, and afterward Bingham sent a note to the ambassador saying, "It was a great privilege for me to have had the opportunity of being with you and Mrs. Leahy during your short visit here."

A few days later, a wire from Washington arrived in Marseille: "Hiram Bingham, Jr., Class VIII, $3600, Marseille has been assigned Vice Consul at Lisbon and directed proceed as soon as practicable. . . . This transfer not made at his request nor for his convenience."



After spending the rest of World War II in Buenos Aires, Bingham (with family, 1953) returned to Connecticut.

The wire from Washington said Bingham was going to be moved out of Marseille. "This transfer not made at his request nor for his convenience," it noted.

There is no explanation in official records for the transfer, though notes found among Bingham's papers suggest the reasons: "Why was I transferred to Lisbon," he wrote. "Attitude toward Jews—me in visa section . . . attitude toward Fry." In any case, on September 4, while Bingham was on home leave, he received another telegram from the State Department: "You are assigned Vice Consul at Buenos Aires and you should proceed upon the termination of your leave of absence."

BINGHAM WAS IN BUENOS Aires when the United States entered World War II. He spent the remainder of the war there in the rank of vice consul and was an ongoing irritant to the State Department with his complaints about Nazis who had slipped out of Europe. They were operating openly in nominally neutral Argentina, whose military government dominated by Col. Juan Domingo Perón hardly disguised its fascist sympathies. "Perón and his whole gang are completely unreliable, and, whatever happens, all countries in South America will be seedbeds of Nazism after the war," Bingham wrote in a confidential memo to his superiors.

When, after the war, Bingham's request to be posted to Nazi-hunting operations in Washington, D.C. was turned down, he resigned from the Foreign Service and returned to the family farm in Connecticut. "For the children it was won-

ROBERT KIM BINGHAM COLLECTION

derful. Daddy was always there," says his daughter Abigail Bingham Endicott, 63, a singer and voice teacher in Washington, D.C. "He spent part of the day playing with the kids and much time in his study, dreaming up new business ideas." He designed a device called the Sportatron, an enclosed court 12 feet by 24 feet with various attachments and adjustments that would allow the user to play handball, tennis, basketball, even baseball in confined spaces. "Unfortunately, he didn't master the skill of selling and promoting something on a big scale," says Abigail. After a while, she says, he lost his patent on the device.

Bingham went through his inheritance. Wanting to live off the land as well as to save money, he bought a cow and chickens. Rose became a substitute teacher. "I was pretty much dressed in hand-me-downs," says William Bingham. His father "tried to fix things around the house, but wasn't good at it."

Amid Harry's financial hardship, his father, who lived in Washington, set up a trust fund to educate Harry's children. Abigail recalls a rare visit from the famous old explorer. "He was wearing a white linen suit and made us line up in order of age," she says. "There were maybe eight or nine of us, and he handed each of us a freshly minted silver dollar."

In his later years, says Abigail, Harry Bingham "told my older sister that he was very sorry he couldn't have left money for the family, but that he was very poor." ("Oh, Daddy, you've given us each other," she replied.) After his widow, Rose, died, the house passed into a trust that allows the Bingham children and others to use it, which is how William came to discover the documents his father had left behind.

WILLIAM'S DISCOVERY HELPED SATISFY a curiosity that had been intensifying ever since the Bingham family was invited, in 1993, to a tribute to Varian Fry and other rescuers, sponsored by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. In 1996, William brought the documents he had found to the museum, where a curator expressed interest in including information about Harry in future exhibits. In 1998, the Yad Vashem Memorial in Jerusalem honored Bingham and ten other diplomats for having saved some 200,000 lives during the war.

Robert Kim Bingham, 66, Harry's sixth child, who went to Jerusalem for the Yad Vashem ceremonies, marshaled a campaign for recognition of his father in his own country; in June 2002, Bingham's "constructive dissent" was recognized when he was designated a Courageous Diplomat by the American Foreign Service Association, the society of Foreign Service professionals, at the State Department. Bingham, said Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, had "risked his life and his career, put it on the line, to help over 2,500 Jews and others who were on Nazi death lists to leave France for America in 1940 and 1941. Harry was prepared to take that risk to his career to do that which he knew was right."

In 2003, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell (above: with Abigail Bingham Endicott and Robert Kim Bingham) paid tribute to Harry Bingham's work in Marseille. Three years later, the Postal Service released a stamp bearing Bingham's visage (below).

Afterward, the department revised Bingham's biographical entry in its official history, highlighting his humanitarian service. In 2006, the Postal Service released a stamp bearing Bingham's likeness.

As Harry Bingham's story spread, a few dozen of the people he had helped and their survivors came forward, writing to his children, filling in the portrait of their father. "He saved my Mother, my sister and I," Elly Sherman, whose family eventually settled in Los Angeles, wrote to Robert Kim Bingham. She included a copy of a visa bearing Harry's signature and dated May 3, 1941—ten days before he left Marseille. "Without him we would not have been able to avoid the concentration camp to which we were assigned two days later."

Abigail Bingham Endicott says she wishes her father knew how proud his children are of him. "We had no idea about the extent of what he had done," she says. She recalls a hymn the family often sang at gatherings and in it she hears a suggestion of her father's predicament in Marseille:

Once to every man and nation, comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, some great decision,
offering each the bloom or blight,
And the choice goes by forever,
'twixt that darkness and that light.

For more on Holocaust heroes, visit Smithsonian.com/bingham

ROBERT KIM BINGHAM COLLECTION; U.S. POSTAL SERVICE / AP IMAGES

RENOWNED IN HIS DAY, *Jan Lievens* WAS LATER ECLIPSED BY HIS FRIEND AND RIVAL. A NEW EXHIBITION ESTABLISHES HIS REPUTATION AS AN OLD MASTER

By Matthew Gurewitsch

OUT OF REMBRANDT'S SHADOW

Telescopes trained on the night sky, astronomers observe the phenomenon of the binary star, which appears to the naked eye to be a single star but consists in fact of two, orbiting a common center of gravity. Sometimes, one star in the pair can so outshine the other that its companion may be detected only by the way its movement periodically alters the brightness of the greater one.

The binary stars we recognize in the firmament of art tend to be of equal brilliance: Raphael and Michelangelo, van Gogh and Gauguin, Picasso and Matisse. But the special case of an "invisible" companion is not unknown. Consider Jan Lievens, born in Leiden in western Holland on October 24, 1607, just 15 months after the birth of Rembrandt van Rijn, another Leiden native.

While the two were alive, admirers spoke of them in the same breath, and the comparisons were not always in Rembrandt's favor. After their deaths, Lievens dropped out of sight—for centuries. Though the artists took quite different paths, their biographies show many parallels. Both served apprenticeships in Amsterdam with the same master, returned to that city later in life and died there in their 60s. They knew each other, may have shared a studio in Leiden early on, definitely shared models and

***The Feast of Esther*, painted by Lievens c. 1625, was identified for years in 20th-century art texts as an early Rembrandt. Like Rembrandt, Lievens (opposite at about 22, in a c. 1629 self-portrait) used contrasts of light and shadow to add drama.**

indeed modeled for each other. They painted on panels cut from the same oak tree, which suggests they made joint purchases of art supplies from the same vendor. They established the exotic, fancy-dress "Oriental" portrait as a genre unto itself and later showed the same unusual predilection for drawing on paper imported from the Far East.

The work the two produced in their early 20s in Leiden was not always easy to tell apart, and as time went on, many a superior Lievens was misattributed to Rembrandt. Quality aside, there are many reasons why one artist's star shines while another's fades. It mattered that Rembrandt spent virtually his entire career in one place, cultivating a single, highly personal style, whereas Lievens moved around, absorbing many different influences. Equally important, Rembrandt lent himself to the role of the lonely genius, a figure dear to the Romantics, whose preferences would shape the tastes of generations to come.

ROYAL PAVILION AND MUSEUMS, BRIGHTON & HOVE; P. 58 PRIVATE COLLECTION; PP. 58-59 NORTH CAROLINA MUSEUM OF ART, RALEIGH, PURCHASED WITH FUNDS FROM THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

In Lievens' *The Raising of Lazarus*, 1631, the luminous shroud being whisked away by an attendant appears to take on the form of a hovering specter. One of the painting's earliest admirers was Rembrandt, who may have owned the original.

"I've often felt that Rembrandt tended to lead Lievens toward stronger observation, and Lievens, who seemed keener on current ideas in the Dutch art world, helped Rembrandt broaden his horizons," says Walter Liedtke, curator of European paintings at Manhattan's Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Once the two artists leave Leiden, Lievens becomes a very different, more international but shallower figure on the London and Antwerp stages." By the 19th century, Lievens had fallen into such deep obscurity as to be lucky to be mentioned at all, even as a pupil of Rembrandt's, which he never was.

With the current tour of the new international retrospective "Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered," Lievens' induction to the pantheon of old masters may at last be at hand. From its opening at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. last fall, the show has moved on to the Milwaukee Art Museum (through April 26) and is scheduled to make a final stop at the Rembrandthuis in Amsterdam (May 17-August 9).

While Lievens' name will be new to many, his work may not be. The sumptuous biblical spectacular *The Feast of Esther*, for instance, was last sold, in 1952, as an early Rembrandt, and was long identified as such in 20th-century textbooks. It is one of more than 130 works featured in the exhibition—from celebrations of the pleasures of the flesh to sober, meditative still lifes and the brooding *Job in His Misery*, which captures the frailty of old age compassionately yet unsentimentally. In surrounding the all-too-human central figure of Job with images of a witch and hobgoblins, Lievens anticipates Goya. In *The Raising of Lazarus* (above), he stages the Gothic scene in a somber palette and with the utmost restraint—Jesus abstaining from grand gestures, Lazarus visible only as a pair of hands reaching skyward from the tomb. Like Rembrandt, Lievens uses pale, glimmering light to suffuse the darkness with intimations of spirituality.

"LIEVENS WAS *not a shy guy with paint.* HE MANIPULATES IT, HE SCRATCHES IT. HE GIVES IT A REALLY PHYSICAL PRESENCE."

These examples, in so many genres, are hardly the works of an also-ran. "We've always seen Lievens through the bright light of Rembrandt, as a pale reflection," says Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., curator of northern Baroque paintings at the National Gallery. "This show lets you embrace Lievens from beginning to end, to understand that this man has his own trajectory and that he wasn't always in the gravity pull of Rembrandt." Wheelock has been particularly struck by the muscularity and boldness of Lievens, which is in marked contrast to most Dutch painting of the time. "The approach is much rougher, much more aggressive," he says. "Lievens was not a shy guy with paint. He manipulates it, he scratches it. He gives it a really physical presence."

Though the Leiden public of Lievens' youth had a high regard for the fine arts, the beacon for any seriously ambitious artist was Amsterdam. Lievens was duly sent there by his father at the tender age of 10 to study with the painter Pieter Lastman, grand master of complex narrative scenes taken from ancient history, classical mythology and the Bible. Still a boy when he returned to Leiden two years later, Lievens lost no time establishing a studio in his family home. The date of his *Old Woman Reading* is uncertain, as is his chronology in general, but scholars place it somewhere between 1621 and 1623, meaning he was just 14 to 16 years old when he painted it. It is a performance of amazing precociousness, as remarkable for the thoughtful expression on the wrinkled face (possibly his grandmother's) as for the effortless depiction of such details as the lenses of her spectacles and the fur of her wrap.

Throughout his early period in Leiden, Lievens worked in a style that was brash and bold: his paintings were on a grand scale, the lighting theatrical, the figures larger than life. In many of these respects, he seems less the disciple of Lastman than of one of the Dutch followers of the revolutionary Italian painter Caravaggio. Dubbed Caravaggisti, these artists had recently returned north from a long stay in Rome and were active in nearby Utrecht. Scholars have yet to discover when and how Lievens fell under the Caravaggisti's spell, but his pictures, with their sharp contrasts of light and dark, expressive gestures and flair for drama, leave little doubt that he did.

In the mid-1620s, Rembrandt, too, headed to Amsterdam to apprentice with Lastman. Six months later, he came home, and from then on, the two young artists likely viewed themselves as equals if not rivals. Rembrandt must have felt a twinge of envy in the winter of 1631-32 when the Flemish master Anthony Van Dyck painted Lievens' portrait and not Rembrandt's. To make matters worse, that likeness later appeared, engraved, in Van Dyck's *Iconography*, a who's who of celebrities of the art world.

Lievens painted *The Feast of Esther* around 1625, about the time Rembrandt returned to Leiden. It is approximately four and a half by five and a half feet, with figures shown three-quarter length, close to the picture plane. (At that time, Rembrandt favored smaller formats.) At the luminous center of the composition, a pale Queen Esther points an accusing finger at Haman, the royal councilor who is plotting to exterminate her people. Her husband, the Persian King Ahasuerus, shares her light, his craggy face set off by a snowy turban and a mantle of gold brocade. Seen from behind, in shadowy profile, Haman is silhouetted against shimmering white drapery, his right hand flying up in dismay.

Old Woman Reading **(top) was painted c. 1621-23 when Lievens was just 14 to 16 years old. His *Still Life with Books* (above), c. 1627-28, with the edges of the pages rendered in thick, viscous pigment, was long attributed to Rembrandt.**

Silks, satins and brocades, elegant plumes and gemstones—details like these give Lievens ample scope to show off his flashy handling of his medium. Not for him the fastidious, enamel-smooth surfaces of the Leiden *Fijnschilders*—"fine painters," in whose meticulously rendered oils every brush stroke disappeared. Lievens reveled in the thickness of the paint and the way it could be shaped and scratched and swirled with a brush, even with the sharp end of a handle. This tactile quality is one of Rembrandt's hallmarks as well; there are now those who think he picked it up from Lievens.

MATTHEW GUREWITSCH'S *articles on culture and the arts appear frequently in the* New York Times *and* SMITHSONIAN.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART, JOHN G. JOHNSON COLLECTION; RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM

"LIEVENS IS THE GREATER IN INVENTIVENESS. . . . EVERYTHING HIS YOUNG SPIRIT ENDEAVORS TO CAPTURE MUST BE *magnificent and lofty.*"

Close in time and manner to *The Feast of Esther* is Lievens' *Pilate Washing His Hands* (below). The young man pouring the cleansing waters from a golden pitcher resembles Rembrandt's youthful self-portraits closely enough to suggest that Rembrandt was in fact the model. The highlights that play over the gold are mesmerizing, and the glaze of the water as it flows over Pilate's hand is as true to life as a photograph. But above all, one is transfixed by Pilate, who looks the viewer straight in the eye, which Rembrandt's figures seldom, if ever, do.

The earliest known comparison of Lievens and Rembrandt comes down to us in a memoir by the Dutch statesman and patron of native talent Constantijn Huygens. Written around 1630, it described an encounter with the two artists, then in their early 20s: "Considering their parentage, there is no stronger evidence against the belief that nobility is in the blood. . . . One of our two youths [Lievens] was the son of a commoner, an embroiderer, the other [Rembrandt], a miller's son. . . . I venture to suggest offhand that Rembrandt is superior to Lievens in his sure touch and liveliness of emotions. Conversely, Lievens is the greater in inventiveness and audacious themes and forms. Everything his young spirit endeavors to capture must be magnificent and lofty. . . . He has an acute and profound insight into all manner of things. . . . My only objection is his stubbornness, which derives from an excess of self-confidence. He either roundly rejects all criticism or, if he acknowledges its validity, takes it in bad spirit."

At their first meeting, Lievens expressed a desire to paint Huygens' portrait, and Huygens invited him to visit The Hague, then the Dutch capital, for that purpose. For years to come, the statesman would be a steadfast Lievens supporter, throwing several courtly commissions his way.

Around 1632, Rembrandt relocated to Amsterdam for good, while Lievens struck out for London, hoping for work at the court of King Charles I. He apparently did several portraits, now lost, of the royal family, including one of the king. About three years later, he left London for Antwerp, where he found a congenial artistic community, busied himself making prints and drawings, taught himself to do woodcuts and undertook various commissions for Jesuit churches. In Antwerp he married Susanna Colijns de Nole, a Catholic and the daughter of a noted sculptor who had worked with the Jesuits. Lievens may have converted to her religion at that time, less for reasons of faith than as a career move. The couple had a son, Jan Andrea, who grew up to be a painter and, on at least one occasion, his father's collaborator.

In 1644 Lievens moved on again, showing up over the next years in Amsterdam, The Hague and Leiden, as opportunities arose. At last, his lifelong dream of a career creating large-scale extravaganzas for princely dwellings was coming true. Widowed shortly after his return to the Netherlands, Lievens married Cornelia de Bray, the daughter of an Amsterdam notary, in 1648.

After Lievens' departure for England, the bold style of his early work had largely fallen from favor with Dutch government officials and the fashionable clientele at court. They now preferred the more polished Italianate manner practiced by Van Dyck and Peter Paul Rubens, painter to the most illustrious crowned heads of Europe. Rembrandt continued to hone his darkling style, which may have cost him

Rembrandt was likely the model for the young man pouring water in Lievens' *Pilate Washing His Hands* (left), painted c. 1625. *Landscape with a Group of Trees* (above: detail), a rare woodcut done c. 1640, is notable for its expressive energy.

BILDARCHIV PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ / ART RESOURCE, NY; RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM

NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH

The robe of the *Young Man in Yellow* emits a golden light that illuminates the face from below and gives the work theatrical flair. Possibly a self-portrait, it was painted c. 1631-32 when Lievens, celebrated by one patron as a prodigy, was about 24.

business. But the pragmatic Lievens did his best to move with the times, adapting his style to satisfy many patrons.

Coincidentally, both Rembrandt and Lievens wound up living along an Amsterdam canal called the Rozengracht during their final years. Rembrandt by this time was reduced effectively to working for room and board—his common-law wife and Titus, his only surviving son, had taken control of his finances. Lievens ended up in sad straits, too. Though demand for his work remained strong, financial mismanagement had left him deep in debt.

As an artist, Lievens never stopped assimilating new influences, which made his own style less distinctive as time went on. But even if he made his mark most memorably as the brash Young Turk of his Leiden days, he never lost his capacity to surprise. In the current show, two scenes of lowlife from his Antwerp period (*A Greedy Couple Surprised by Death* and *Fighting Cardplayers and Death*) explode with verve and violence. In a different vein, *Gideon's Sacrifice* shows an angel gently touching the tip of his wand to an altar to ignite a sacrificial flame. Long lost, the painting resurfaced on the art market in Rome in 1995, attributed to a lesser artist of the Italian Renaissance. Now it is given to Lievens as a work of the early 1650s—an ingenious combination of elements from various periods of his career. No longer invisible, Rembrandt's companion star is shining with a luster all its own.

See more images of Lievens' work at Smithsonian.com/lievens

In a once strife-torn Belfast neighborhood (where murals today dramatize a message of hope), reconciliation is taking hold. Even so, says Father Aidan Troy, formerly of a Belfast parish, progress must be nurtured day by day: "Peace is a delicate plant."

GETTING PAST THE TROUBLES

A decade after Protestants and Catholics agreed on a peace treaty in Northern Ireland, both sides are adjusting to a hopeful new reality **BY JOSHUA HAMMER**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW MCCONNELL

The crime that still haunts Don Browne took place on a cold, damp evening in February 1985 outside a housing development in a working-class neighborhood of Derry, Northern Ireland. That night, Browne says, he handed over a cache of weapons to fellow members of a Catholic paramilitary unit. The gunmen whom he had supplied pulled up to a row house where Douglas McElhinney, 42, a former officer in the Ulster Defense Regiment—the Northern Ireland branch of the British Army—was visiting a friend. As McElhinney was about to drive away, a member of the hit squad killed him with a sawed-off shotgun.

For his role in the murder, Browne, now 49, was sentenced to life. At the time a member of the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), a breakaway faction of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), he was sent to Long Kesh Prison outside Belfast. He spent more than 13 years behind bars. Then, in September 1998, he was released under a settlement signed by Britain and the Republic of Ireland: the Good Friday, or Belfast, Agreement, which had been endorsed by Sinn Féin—the IRA's political wing—and most other Catholic and Protestant parties in Northern Ireland.

"To hear what [former] enemies experienced is life-changing," says Don Browne, INLA hit-squad member turned yoga teacher.

At first, Browne had difficulties adjusting to the outside world. He was terrified to cross streets because he couldn't judge the speed of cars. He had also lost social skills. "If I asked a woman out for a cup of coffee, was I being a pervert?" he recalls wondering.

Two things helped ease his way into postwar society. Browne had studied meditation with a dozen "rough-and-tough provos [provisional IRA members]" in Long Kesh, and after his release, he began teaching yoga classes in Derry. An initiative called the Sustainable Peace Network proved even more beneficial. Today, Browne brings together former combatants from both sides—and sometimes their victims' families—to share experiences and describe the difficulties of adjusting to life in a quiescent Northern Ireland. "In the early days, some combatants—both republicans and Loyalists—were threatened to not take part [in the reconciliation efforts]," Browne tells me over coffee in his yoga studio outside Derry's 400-year-old city walls. But the threats have subsided. "To hear what your [former] enemies experienced is life-changing," he says.

THE TROUBLES, as Northern Ireland's sectarian strife came to be known, erupted nearly 40 years ago, when Catholic Irish nationalists, favoring unification with the Irish Republic to the south, began a violent campaign against Britain and the Loyalist Protestant paramilitaries who supported continued British rule. Over some 30 years, more than 3,500 people were killed—soldiers, suspected informers, militia members and civilians caught in bombings and crossfire—and thousands more were injured, some maimed for life. Residents of Belfast and Derry were sealed off in a patchwork of segregated neighborhoods divided by barbed wire and patrolled by masked guerrillas. As a 17-year-old Catholic teenager fresh from the countryside in 1972, Aidan Short and a friend wandered unwittingly onto a Protestant-controlled road in Belfast. The two were seized by Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) gunmen, a Loyalist paramilitary group. Accused of being members of the IRA, the teens were shot at point-blank range, leaving Short paralyzed and his friend—shot through the face—still traumatized 35 years later. "A small mistake could ruin your life," Short told me.

Ten years ago, the Good Friday Agreement officially put an end to the Troubles. The deal, brokered by President Bill Clinton, Senator George Mitchell, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Republic of Ireland *Taoiseach* (equivalent to

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PHOTOS BY ANDREW MCCONNELL / WPN; MAP: GUILBERT GATES

Father Aidan Troy (above: at his former Belfast parish) insists that "the only ones who can [make peace] are the perpetrators."

prime minister) Bertie Ahern, represented a historic compromise. It created a semiautonomous government body comprising both Catholics and Protestants, and called for disarmament of paramilitary groups, release of jailed combatants and reorganization of the police force (at the time, 93 percent Protestant). The agreement also stipulated that Northern Ireland would remain part of Britain until a majority of its citizens voted otherwise. Another breakthrough occurred in May 2007: Martin McGuinness, a leader of Sinn Féin (headed by Gerry Adams) and former commander of the IRA in Derry, formed a coalition government with Ian Paisley, a firebrand Protestant minister and chairman of the hardline Democratic Unionist Party until June 2008. (The DUP had refused to sign the 1998 agreement.) "I still meet people who say they [had] to pinch themselves at the sight of us together," McGuinness told me during an interview at Stormont Castle, a Gothic-styled landmark that serves as the seat of government.

Not everyone welcomes the peace. Shunning the tenth-anniversary celebrations last April, Jim Allister, a former DUP leader, declared that the Good Friday Agreement "rewarded 30 years of terrorism in Northern Ireland by undermining both justice and democracy." Surprisingly, the construction of so-called peace walls—barriers of steel, concrete and barbed wire erected between Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods—has continued since the agreement. Most of the walls, which range from a few hundred yards to three miles in length, stretch across working-class neighborhoods of Belfast, where Protestants and Catholics live hard by one another and sectarian animosities haven't died down. Some IRA splinter groups are still planting explosives and, rarely, executing enemies.

During the Troubles, IRA and Loyalist paramilitaries functioned as neighborhood security forces, often keeping the two sides at bay. Now those internal controls have disappeared, and communities have requested that the municipal council construct barriers to protect residents. At a business conference in Belfast last May, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg commended the progress made so far. But he said that the

In 1981, Catholic youths hurled rocks at Belfast security forces.

BOTTOM: IAN BERRY / MAGNUM PHOTOS

peace walls would have to be dismantled before U.S. companies step up investment. Paisley responded that only local communities could decide when the time is right. The peace process "is not like going into a darkened room and turning on a light switch," says McGuinness. The IRA, the armed wing of McGuinness' own Sinn Féin, waited seven years before handing over its weapons. "It's going to take time."

Even in its embryonic stages, though, the Northern Ireland agreement is increasingly regarded as a model of conflict resolution. Politicians from Israel and Palestine to Sri Lanka and Iraq have studied the accord as a way to move a recalcitrant, even calcified, peace process forward. McGuinness recently traveled to Helsinki to mediate between Iraqi Sunnis and Shiites. And Morgan Tsvangirai, Zimbabwe's opposition leader, praised Northern Ireland's "new beginnings" when he visited Belfast last spring to address a gathering of liberal parties from around the world.

As political stability strengthened, Northern Ireland began looking toward the Republic of Ireland to learn how to transform itself into an economic powerhouse. In the Republic, an educated population, skilled labor force, generous European Union investment, strong leadership and development of a high-tech sector created unprecedented prosperity. Within a decade—from the mid-1990s on—the "Celtic Tiger" turned itself into Europe's second-wealthiest nation (behind Luxembourg).

Today, however, the global economic crisis has hit the Republic's economy hard and slowed development momentum in Northern Ireland. Even before the worldwide financial meltdown occurred, Northern Ireland faced serious obstacles—reluctance among U.S. venture capitalists to invest, lingering sectarianism, and poor education, health and employment prospects in sections of Belfast and Derry. Yet McGuinness and other leaders are optimistic that investors will be attracted once the world economy improves and confidence builds.

NO TOWN OR CITY better illustrates how far Northern Ireland has come and how far it has to go than its capital, Belfast, which straddles the Lagan River in County Antrim. Investment capital, much of it from England, has poured into the city since the coming of peace. The city center, once deserted after dark, is now a jewel of restored Victorian architecture and trendy boutiques. A new riverside promenade winds past a renovation project that is transforming the moribund shipyards, at one time Belfast's largest employer, into a revitalized district, the Titanic Quarter, named for the doomed luxury liner that was built here in 1909-12. The Lagan, once a neglected, smelly and polluted estuary, has been dramatically rehabilitated; an underwater aeration system has vastly improved water quality.

"People in Belfast are defining themselves less and less by religion," entrepreneur Bill Wolsey told me over a pint of Guinness at his elegant Merchant Hotel, a restored 1860

Central Belfast (where landmarks include City Hall, built in 1906, and the Belfast Eye Ferris wheel) is becoming a tourist mecca.

Italianate building in the historic Cathedral Quarter. "Until the Merchant opened, the most famous hotel in Belfast was the Europa—which was bombed by the IRA dozens of times," Wolsey says. "We needed a hotel that the people of Belfast would be proud of—something architecturally significant. And it's leading a revival of the whole district." In the lively neighborhood surrounding the Merchant, traditional Irish music can be heard regularly in pubs.

But half a mile away, one enters a different world. On Shankill Road, a Loyalist stronghold in west Belfast, youths loiter on litter-strewn sidewalks in front of fish-and-chips shops and liquor stores. Brightly painted murals juxtapose images of the late Queen Mother and the Ulster Freedom Fighters, a notorious Loyalist paramilitary group. Other wall paintings celebrate the Battle of the Boyne, near Belfast, the 1690 victory of Protestant King William III over Catholic King James II, the deposed monarch attempting to regain the British throne. (William's victory consolidated British rule over the whole of Ireland. British hegemony began to unravel with the 1916 Irish uprising; five years later, the Anglo-Irish Treaty created the Irish Free State out of 26 southern counties. Six northern counties, where Protestants formed the majority of the population, remained part of Britain.) Another half mile away, in the Catholic Ardoyne neighborhood, equally lurid murals, of IRA hunger strikers, loom over brick row houses where the armed struggle received wide support.

In August 2001, the Rev. Aidan Troy arrived as pastor of Holy Cross Parish on Crumlin Road, a dividing line between Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods. Earlier, in June, a sectarian dispute had escalated into heckling and bottle-throwing by Protestants who tried to stop Catholic children from reaching their school. When the new school year began in the fall, Father Troy attracted international media attention when he escorted frightened children through the gantlet every school morning for three months.

Politicians from Israel and Palestine to Sri Lanka and Iraq have studied the accord as a way to **move a recalcitrant peace process** forward.

The area remains tense today. Troy leads me to the rear of the church, its gray stone walls splattered with paint tossed by Protestants. "Even last week they threw [a paint bomb] in," he says, indicating a fresh yellow stain. Peace has brought other difficulties, Troy tells me: the suicide rate among Belfast's youth has risen sharply since the Troubles ended, largely because, the priest believes, the sense of camaraderie and shared struggle provided by the paramilitary groups has been replaced by ennui and despair. "So many young people get into drinking and drugs early on," Troy says. And linger-

In Belfast (below: where nightlife thrives), residents define themselves "less and less by religion," says businessman Bill Wolsey.

In 1811, a local poet deemed the Giant's Causeway formations (above) "the most stupendous colonnade ever erected by nature."

ing sectarian tensions discourage business development. In 2003, Dunne's Stores, a British chain, opened a large department store on Crumlin Road. The store recruited Catholic and Protestant employees in equal numbers, but hostile exchanges involving both shoppers and staffers escalated. Because the store's delivery entrances faced the Catholic Ardoyne neighborhood rather than neutral ground, Dunne's was soon deemed a "Catholic" store and deserted by Protestants. Last May, Dunne's shut its doors.

Troy believes that it will take decades for the hatred to end. Ironically, he says, Northern Ireland's best hope lies with the very men who once incited violence. "I don't justify one drop of blood, but I do believe that sometimes the only ones who can [make peace] are the perpetrators," Troy tells me. "The fact we haven't had a hundred deaths since this time last year can only be good." Peace, he says, "is a very delicate plant." Now, he adds, "there's a commitment" from both sides to nurture it.

The Old Bushmills Distillery attracts 120,000 visitors annually.

THE NEXT MORNING, I drive out from Belfast to the north coast of County Antrim, where something of a tourist boom is underway. Green meadows, dotted by yellow wildflowers, stretch along cliffs pounded by the Irish Sea. I follow signs for the Giant's Causeway, a scenic shoreline famed for its 40,000 basalt columns rising from the sea—the result of an ancient volcanic eruption. Some of the structures tower four stories above the water; others barely break the surface to create a natural walkway—remnants, according to Irish myth, of a path laid to Scotland by the Irish giant Finn McCool.

Two miles inland lies the quaint village of Bushmills, its narrow main street lined with old stone taverns and country inns. I pull into the packed parking lot of Old Bushmills Distillery, makers of the popular Irish whiskey. The distillery received its first license from King James I in 1608. In 2005, Diageo, a British spirits manufacturer, purchased the label, tripled production and renovated the facilities: 120,000 visitors or so tour each year. Darryl McNally, the manager, leads me down to a storage cellar, a vast, cool room filled with 8,000 oak bourbon casks imported from Louisville, Kentucky, in which the malt whiskey will be aged

William Moore (of Derry's Loyalist group Apprentice Boys) supports peace: "We recognize that the city is 80 percent Catholic."

for a minimum of five years. In the wood-paneled tasting room, four different Bushmills single malts have been laid out in delicate glasses. I take a few sips of Bushmills' finest, the distinctly smooth, 21-year-old "Rare Beast."

Later, from the ruined stone ramparts of Dunluce Castle, dating to the 14th century, I gaze across the Irish Sea's Northern Channel toward the southwest coast of Scotland, some 20 miles away. Stone Age settlers crossed the straits here, then Vikings, and later, Scots, who migrated in the early 17th century—part of the still bitterly resented Protestant colonization of Catholic Ireland under James I.

Farther down the coast lies Derry, a picturesque city on the River Foyle, freighted with historical significance for both Catholics and Protestants. I cross the murky river by a modern steel suspension bridge. A steep hill is dominated by the city's 400-year-old stone ramparts, one of the oldest continuous city walls in Europe. Inside the wall stands an imposing stone building—headquarters of the Apprentice Boys of Derry, a Loyalist group. William Moore, its general secretary, leads me upstairs to a second-floor museum, where multimedia exhibits recount the establishment in 1613 of an English Protestant colony in Derry—previously a Catholic settlement. The newcomers built a walled town on the hill and renamed it Londonderry. In 1689, James II, a Catholic, set out from France to capture the city, a key offensive in his plan to cross the Irish Sea and retake the British throne. During the 105-day siege that followed, Moore tells me, "inhabitants were reduced to eating dogs and cats, and 10,000 of 30,000 Protestants died of starvation and disease." William III's forces broke the cordon and sent James back to France in defeat. Since 1714, the Apprentice Boys have commemorated the siege with a procession on the ramparts. (The group takes its name from 13 young apprentices who shut the gates and pulled up the drawbridges before James' forces arrived.) Catholics have long viewed the march as a provocation. "It's commemorating 10,000 deaths," Moore insists defensively.

Catholics have their own deaths to mark. On January 30, 1972—Bloody Sunday—British paratroopers firing rifles here killed 14 protesters demonstrating against the British practice of interning paramilitary suspects without trial. (A British government-funded tribunal has been investigating the incident for a decade.) The massacre is seared into the consciousness of every Catholic in Northern Ireland—and is one reason why the sectarian split ran so deep here during the Troubles. Protestants referred to the city as "Londonderry," while Catholics called it "Derry." (The bite is going out of this dispute, although the official name remains Londonderry.) Kathleen Gormley, principal of St. Cecilia's College, remembers being upbraided by British troops whenever she used its Catholic name. "We're obsessed with history here," Gormley tells me.

Yet times are changing, she says. Gormley believes that Derry has made more progress in defusing sectarian animosity than Belfast, which she visits often. "People in Belfast are more entrenched in their mind-set," she tells

me. "There's a lot more cross-community involvement here."

In contrast to Belfast, where certain Loyalist parades continue to provoke disruptions, in Derry tensions have eased. The Protestant Apprentice Boys have even reached out to the Bogside Residents, a group representing Derry's Catholics. "We recognize that the city is 80 percent Catholic," says Moore. "Without their understanding, we knew we'd [keep having] major difficulties." The Boys even opened its building to Catholics, inviting them to tour the siege museum. "It helped us to relate to them as human beings, to understand the history from their perspective," Gormley told me.

Though his midsection is thickening and his gray hair has thinned, McAllister is said to have been among the most powerful Sinn Féin men in south Armagh. By the late 1970s, he says in a heavy brogue, "the IRA controlled the ground here." British forces retreated to fortified camps and moved around only by helicopter; ubiquitous posters on telephone poles in those days depicted a silhouetted IRA gunman peering down a sight and the slogan "Sniper at Work."

McAllister says that the IRA's paramilitaries have evolved into a powerful local mafia that controls the smuggling of diesel fuel and cigarettes from across the border—and

"When the war finished, a lot of IRA men said, **'This is over, forget about it.'** But a small number are still at it," McAllister says.

BUT OLD HABITS DIE HARD. One morning, I drive to south Armagh, a region of rolling green hills, pristine lakes and bucolic villages along the border with the Republic of Ireland. It's a land of ancient Irish myths, and stony, unforgiving soil that historically kept colonists away. During the Troubles, this was an IRA stronghold, where highly trained local cells carried out relentless bombings and ambushes of British troops. "We were first seen as 'stupid ignorant paddies,' and they were 'Green Berets.' Then they started getting killed on a regular basis," says Jim McAllister, a 65-year-old former Sinn Féin councilman. We had met at his run-down housing development in the hamlet of Cullyhanna.

tolerates no competition. Because of higher duty taxes, diesel in Britain is more expensive than in the Republic of Ireland; the open border here makes it absurdly easy to bring cheaper fuel across illegally. (Smugglers also transport low-priced tractor fuel into Northern Ireland, where it's chemically treated for use in cars and trucks.) "When the war finished, a lot of IRA men said, 'This is over, forget about it.' But a small number are still at it," McAllister says.

We drive down country lanes to the cottage of Stephen Quinn, whose son, Paul, fell out with IRA members in Cullyhanna in 2007—some say because he was smuggling fuel without their permission. (McAllister says that while Paul

Stephen Quinn (foreground, with local leader Jim McAllister) seeks justice in the IRA murder of his son, Paul (below: billboard).

MURDER!
IS THIS THE PEACE YOU SIGNED UP FOR?
YOUR COMMUNITY IN THE GRIP OF MURDERERS.
PAUL QUINN REFUSED TO BE BULLIED FOR THAT HE WAS BEATEN TO DEATH
CARDINAL O'FIAICH SQUARE
CEARNÓG AN CHAIRDINÉIL Ó FIAICH
CROSSMAGLEN TD
CARLINGFORD STREET
SRÁID CHARLAN

did a little smuggling, it was more his attitude toward IRA locals that got him into trouble.) "My son had no respect for them. He got into fistfights with them," Stephen Quinn, a retired trucker, tells me. One evening in October, Paul and a friend were lured to a farmhouse across the border, where Paul was beaten to death with iron bars and clubs with metal spikes. (His companion, also beaten, survived.) "We're the bosses around here," the survivor reported one of the men as saying.

In the aftermath of the murder, hundreds of local people, including McAllister, braved threats from local "provos" to protest. As we drive around the tidy central square in Crossmaglen, south Armagh's largest village, he now points out a placard bearing a photograph of Paul Quinn over the words: "Is This the Peace We Signed Up For? Your Community Is in the Grip of Murderers." "It would have been unheard of to put up a poster like that two years ago," McAllister says. "By murdering Paul Quinn, the IRA has changed things big-time." McAllister says Quinn's murderers—still unidentified—will be brought to justice.

Four separate criminal tribunals are currently underway in Northern Ireland, examining past atrocities including Bloody Sunday. In addition, families of victims of the August 15, 1998, Omagh bombing, in which 29 people died, are pursuing a landmark civil suit against members of the "real" IRA, a dissident splinter group of the IRA. (The group "apologized" for the killings several days later.) In 2007 Northern Ireland also established the Consultative Group on the Past, to explore ways of illuminating the truth about the thousands of deaths. Chaired by a former Anglican archbishop, Lord Robin Eames, and a former Catholic priest, Denis Bradley, the group issued its recommendations in late January. Among its proposals were setting up a South African-style Truth and Reconciliation Commission and making payments to victims on both sides.

But like everything else in this country, the issue is fraught. Loyalists contend that such a commission would let the IRA off too easy. Catholics, meanwhile, want all murders, including those of republican fighters by British soldiers, to be investigated. "The definition of what a victim is remains one of the most contentious issues in Northern Ireland," Bradley told me. "We have moved past armed conflict and civil unrest. But we haven't moved past the political issues on which these things had their basis."

Even as the dispute continues, individuals are making their own attempts to confront the past. Back at the yoga studio in Derry, Don Browne, the former member of a hit squad, tells me that he wouldn't be opposed to a private meeting with the family of McElhinney, the former UDR man murdered 24 years ago. He admits he is anxious about the prospect: "I'm worried about retraumatizing the family. I don't know if they've found closure," he says. A decade after the end of the Troubles, it is an issue with which all of Northern Ireland seems to be grappling.

Lasting peace (below: symbolized by a sculpture in Derry) is "going to take time," says Sinn Féin leader Martin McGuinness.

View a photo retrospective on the Troubles at Smithsonian.com/northernireland

HAPPY AS CLAMS

In the Pacific Northwest, fishermen and others are cashing in on the growing yen for a funny-looking mollusk turned worldwide delicacy

BY CRAIG WELCH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATALIE FOBES

Craig Parker popped his head above the surf, peeled off his dive mask and clambered aboard the *Ichiban*. We were anchored 50 yards offshore from a fir-lined peninsula that juts into Puget Sound. Sixty feet below, where Parker had spent his morning, the seafloor was flat and sandy—barren, to unschooled eyes, except for the odd flounder or orange sea pen. Parker's eyes, though, were well trained. Wearing a neoprene dry suit, he stood in the boat surrounded by the morning's haul: a glistening payload of an absurdly proportioned shellfish defined by a mass of pudgy, lolling flesh.

Buried in the muck beneath Puget Sound lives the Pacific Northwest's most profitable marine creature, a mollusk so valuable that gangsters have traded it for narcotics: the geoduck (pronounced "gooey duck"), the world's largest burrowing clam. Its long, leathery neck can stretch to the length of a baseball bat or recoil to a wrinkled nub. The neck resembles an aardvark's snout, an elephant's trunk or a monstrous prehistoric earthworm emerging from a fist-size shell, among other things.

Forty years ago this mollusk was virtually unknown outside the Northwest. Today Puget Sound fishermen sell four million pounds of it each year, or about two million clams' worth. Swanky New York bistros serve geoduck with rice wine vinegar. Japanese chefs slice it for sushi and sashimi. Most of the harvest goes to China, where cooks in Shanghai and Beijing simmer the clams in hot pots. A single geoduck can fetch $60 in a Hong Kong fish market.

The lowly bivalve, it seems, has come out of its shell. Like many Pacific Northwesterners, I'd long been amused and amazed by the geoduck's rise from obscurity to delicacy. The outsize creature somehow provokes outsize behavior: divers swim among sharks to collect it; scientists labor over burbling caldrons to grow it; detectives track smugglers through night-vision goggles to protect it. So I set out to visit some of those whose lives are linked—by occupation or obsession—to this

They may not be beautiful, but geoducks (left: gathered aboard a fishing boat in Puget Sound) fetch a pretty price, more than salmon or Dungeness crab. Craig Parker (above) dives for the giant clams.

homely creature. What I found was a universe as unusual as *Panopea abrupta* itself.

The name geoduck comes from the Nisqually Indian *gweduc*, which means "dig deep." The clam uses a tiny foot to burrow into the seafloor as it grows. Its shell can end up several feet down, with only its neck poking up into the water. Called siphons, these necks, double-barreled like a shotgun, dimple the sand like rows of wheat. Geoducks feed by drawing microscopic creatures called phytoplankton down one side of the neck, and they expel filtered water through the other. Once buried, a geoduck's shell remains sedentary. While other clams move to avoid predators, a geoduck, when approached by a hungry crab or spiny dogfish, retracts its siphon, like a turtle withdrawing its head.

Geoducks can reach 14 pounds and live more than 150 years—so long that scientists use rings on the clams' shells to track climate change. Geoducks are broadcast spawners: several times a year, in late winter or early spring, males release sperm in smoky clouds, which causes females to release millions of eggs. Within 48 hours, shelled larvae begin swimming; weeks later they drop to the seafloor and start digging. Those landing on rocky bottoms can grow into gnarled clams with dirty gray siphons; those hitting loose sand dig deeper and grow plumper, producing the coveted ivory-colored meat.

Related species grow from Argentina to New Zealand and Japan, but the largest geoducks reside on North America's Pacific Coast. There they support commercial fishing in southeast Alaska, British Columbia and Washington, where the geoduck trade got its start. Hundreds of millions of geoducks inhabit Puget Sound, many of them dwelling in waters hundreds of feet deep. Fishermen collect the clams by hand, by diving to the seafloor trailing breathing tubes. The law restricts divers to waters less than 70 feet deep, mostly for safety reasons: if they went any deeper, they might need to recover inside a decompression chamber.

During Parker's morning dive, in water a chilly 57 degrees Fahrenheit, he had crawled on the seafloor, where anemones glow in waggling fingers of lavender, and pink sea stars shuffle in pursuit of prey. Breathing air through an umbilical linked to a compressor on the boat, Parker scanned the smooth sand for siphon tips. He was armed only with a water spray gun, called a stinger, with which he loosened clams from their beds. In 90 minutes, he had gathered about 150 geoducks.

From a skiff tied alongside the 36-foot *Ichiban*, I watched with Parker's friend Casey Bakker, a geoduck diver and seafood dealer, as Parker's crew packed the mollusks into plastic crates. Parker and his crew members are all Squaxin Island Indians; Native American tribes hold exclusive treaty rights to half of Puget Sound's commercial shellfish harvests. The clams would be taken to a dock, loaded onto a refrigerated truck, then boxed in ice for shipping. Bakker had arranged for the bivalves to be flown that night, still wriggling, to China.

> A gray whale flattened a diver like a whack from a two-by-four. "Down there, a thousand-pound sea lion doesn't look substantially different from a grizzly," Bakker said.

Geoduck fishing is grueling, even hazardous work. Fishermen drag hundreds of feet of line in a nearly weightless environment, wrestling for leverage and toiling against the tides. A few geoduck divers have been killed on the job. Others have been wrapped around anchors, tangled in gear or swept off by undercurrents. A gray whale's barnacled snout once nosed through the silt and struck Bakker's friend Mark Mikkelsen, flattening him like a whack from a two-by-four. He escaped with a bruise. Bakker once came whisker to whisker with a sea lion. "Down there, a thousand-pound sea lion doesn't look substantially different from a grizzly," he recalled.

Parker recently spied a sixgill shark, and not long before, he confronted a flaming red Pacific octopus (both of these were more thrill than threat). Parker said he struggled for years as a commercial salmon fisherman but started hauling geoducks a decade ago after seeing others profit. "The truth of the matter is, I was scared to death to dive," Parker

said. "But these guys were making serious, serious money."

For centuries Native Americans grubbed geoducks from the shallowest parts of their range whenever waters receded far enough. They ate them fresh or smoked. European settlers, too, found geoducks savory. Skillfully cooked, a geoduck would "puzzle persons who tasted it for the first time as to whether they were eating fish, flesh, or fowl," naturalist R.E.C. Stearns wrote in 1882. I found that the clams tasted organic and meaty when baked with mushrooms and onions; served raw they're brackish and chewy like squid, with a faint orange-maple tang.

Geoducks are a source of Pacific Northwest pride, exalted in song ("You can hear the diggers say, as they're headed for the bay, oh I gotta dig a duck, gotta dig a duck a day") and romanticized in novels like David Guterson's *Snow Falling on Cedars*, in which young Ishmael and Hatsue kiss after a glorious day spent digging the clams. Citing the animal's tendency to stick its neck out, Evergreen State College in Olympia adopted the geoduck as its mascot. The Geoduck Tavern, an aging waterfront bar on the Olympic Peninsula, sponsors a contest during the lowest tide of the year to see which patron can bag the biggest specimen. Gray-haired men sprawl on mud flats, arms buried in tidal sludge. "I dig that dirt out and reach down and reach down, way down, and feel the top of its shell, then take a little hand trawl to break the adhesion, then reach down again and wiggle and wiggle and wiggle until it comes," said Roy Ewen, who has been digging geoducks for 50 years. "It's one of life's real joys."

A Navy diver changed the geoduck's fate in the 1960s, when, searching for lost torpedoes near a submarine base in Puget Sound, he discovered geoduck colonies in the icy deep. The state of Washington auctioned the rights to harvest the clams. Brian Hodgson and a group of hunting buddies borrowed money to lease sections of seabed and started selling

Geoducks live from Southern California to Alaska, with some of the largest residing in Puget Sound, where Native Americans have rights to half the local clams. (The *Ichiban*, above left, carries Squaxin Island tribe members. Craig Parker's dives are monitored by his father, Glen, top.) Divers spend hours digging in the sand (above: using a high-pressure hose to uncover mollusks).

LOWER RIGHT: NEIL MCDANIEL; MAP: GUILBERT GATES

geoducks to chowder houses in Washington. With a competitive streak and a head for numbers, Hodgson, a former auditor, quickly became the king of the geoduck trade. A Japanese-American business partner helped him make forays into the Far East in the early 1970s. By the 1980s, Chinese consumers had come to relish the clams. From this indelicate creature, a delicacy was born.

"When you break it down there's a taste with geoduck, a freshness," says Jon Rowley, a seafood marketer who helped popularize Alaska's Copper River salmon. With pollution whittling down shellfish beds in Asia, the freshness itself is a commodity. "That taste is the taste of yesteryear," Rowley adds. Consumers pay more for geoducks, pound for pound, than for Puget Sound salmon or Dungeness crab.

Geoduck fishing is heavily regulated, with harvests strictly limited—a perfect recipe for mischief. Hodgson was accused of stealing a million pounds of clams in the 1980s and eventually pleaded guilty. He had underreported harvests, swiped clams from polluted areas that had been placed off-limits and created a map of closed shellfish beds—the "Poacher's Handbook," he called it—which he gave to his divers.

Washington State's Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) have clamped down on geoduck crime, and enforcement officers now monitor legal harvests. But poaching and smuggling continue. Bandits falsify records, stash their stolen geoduck contraband in secret compartments in boat hulls, or employ night-vision goggles to grab thousands of geoducks after dark, when clam fishing is illegal. "We've seen tax evasion, extortion, mail fraud, money laundering, people trading clams for Vicodin—you name it," says Lt. Ed Volz, head of special investigations for WDFW. "There's just tremendous money to be made."

Wildlife authorities have stepped up undercover investigations, spying on geoduck thieves from boats (though some poachers use radar to detect vessels trailing them), conducting surveillance from beaches and using underwater cameras to document thefts. In a sting operation a decade ago, one geoduck dealer paid a hit man $5,000 to rough up a rival who was driving up the wages divers earned digging geoducks. The "hit man"—an informant—recorded the transaction for federal agents. The would-be victim was ushered into hiding and the dealer arrested. Today the informant, too, is in prison, convicted in 2003 of masterminding a new smuggling ring that illegally harvested more than $1 million worth of geoducks.

CRAIG WELCH *wrote about Northern spotted owls in the January issue. He is working on a book about wildlife thieves.*
NATALIE FOBES *is a photographer and writer based in Seattle.*

"See how they're sticking their necks out? They're feeding," Goodwin said. The tiny siphons stretched skyward, like sparrow chicks craning toward a worm.

Like a clear-cut forest, heavily fished wild geoduck beds can take decades to regenerate. That's why a biologist named C. Lynn Goodwin helped figure out an alternative.

Inside a beachfront warehouse on Puget Sound's Dabob Bay, Goodwin led me along a sopping floor to the geoduck trade's newest front: a commercial hatchery. Water piped from Puget Sound sprinkled over a basin resembling an enormous birdbath. It was filled with thousands of pebble-size baby geoducks. The shells, smaller than Goodwin's pinkie nail, couldn't contain the clams' girth. "See how they're sticking their necks out? They're feeding," Goodwin said. The tiny siphons stretched skyward, like sparrow chicks craning toward a worm.

Goodwin, who has studied geoducks since 1967 and retired from the state wildlife agency in 1994, remains a clam fanatic. He named his sailboat *Panope* and his car license plate reads "GEODKR." In the early 1970s, Goodwin became the first person ever to breed geoducks in a laboratory setting—in a five-gallon bucket. "I just wanted to see if it could be done," Goodwin recalled. To study the mollusk's early life stages, he dropped dozens of clams in cold water and fed them for several weeks,

then jacked up the water temperature, inducing a few males to release sperm. But his equipment was primitive, his clam food was riddled with bacteria and he couldn't get the larvae to grow reliably. If he could, he reasoned, perhaps the state could someday plant geoduck beds, much like people farm oysters.

At a state research hatchery in the 1980s, Goodwin and his colleagues succeeded in producing baby mollusks. Getting geoducks to grow after the creatures were transplanted was another matter. The researchers planted little geoducks and big ones, tucked them neatly in the sand and dumped them from boats, buried them in deep and shallow water. "We did at least 100 experiments and I think we planted 18 million clams on old, harvested beds," Goodwin said, laughing. Almost every time, the crop died.

Goodwin and I strolled past larvae-rearing tanks as big as brewery boilers. A tang filled the air, the smell of a fetid rain forest on a hot day. Down the hall, water-heater-size plastic bladders bubbled with shellfish feed—algae of varying hues, from mahogany to brilliant green.

By the mid-1990s, other biologists finished the work Goodwin began. They caged the clams in protective plastic cones covered with mesh, allowing the clams to burrow and grow while protected from predators. That practice, along with Goodwin's research, led to operations like this, run by a shellfish company called Taylor Resources, which provides months-old geoducks to clam farms.

Geoduck farmers place starter clams on tidelands leased from private landowners, poking thousands of plastic pipes through the surf like headstones. Acres of mesh netting blanket the operation. After four or five years, farmers, on foot, drag pressure hoses across the mud during low tides and dig out their harvest. Clam farms in Washington now sell nearly a million pounds of geoducks a year.

In traditional fish farms, salmon or cod may be fed pellets and crammed like hogs into net pens, from which diseases may spread to wild fish. But farmed geoducks, once planted, feed and grow naturally. "So far there have been no diseases known that spread from geoduck farms to a natural population," Goodwin told me, though "there may be down the line." Still, some environmentalists and coastal homeowners want to block new farms and have existing ones dismantled. Activists fear that the miles of clam farms now dominating some shallow bays may drive forage fish from Puget Sound's near shore. Residents also worry that the tons of sand turned over by geoduck harvesting smothers eelgrass beds serving as nurseries to young salmon. They complain that the plastic pipes and nets blow ashore in storms. To be sure, the environmental risks remain largely unknown. Scientists are just beginning to study geoduck aquaculture's impact on the Sound.

Some scientists also worry about the risks that farmed geoducks could pose to native populations. Hatchery-raised geoducks may not be as genetically diverse as wild ones, and some experts fear that transplanted geoducks that breed with natives could "change the genetic structure of wild stocks," says Brent Vadopalas, a biologist at the University of Washington. Anything that reduces genetic diversity could make wild populations less able to adapt in response to disease or changes in habitat. Could that alter long-term survival? "It's a legitimate concern," Goodwin concedes.

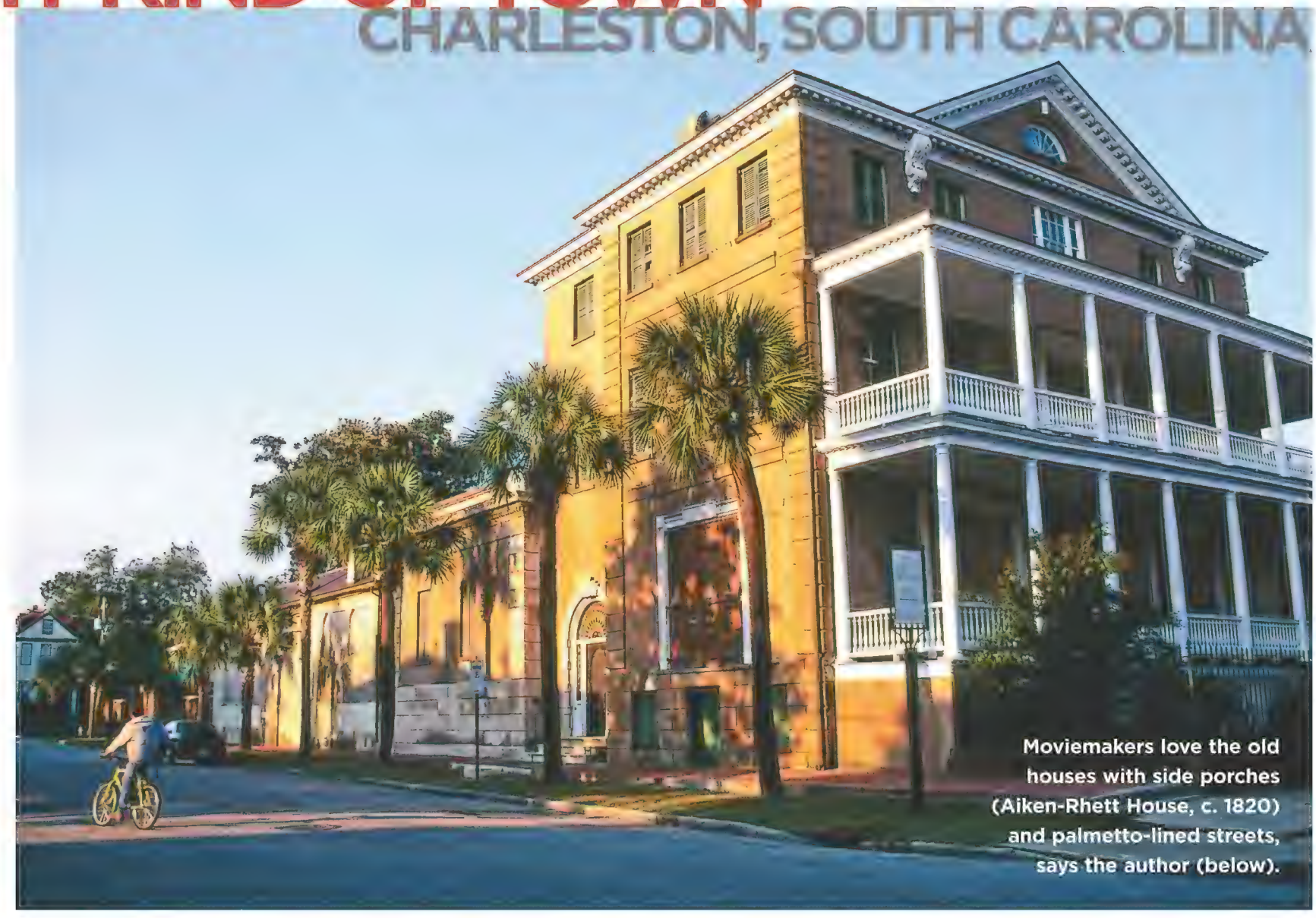
Today, at 70, Goodwin works as a consultant for another geoduck operation, Seattle Shellfish. He lives a ten-minute drive from Taylor Resources' hatchery, where he still does research in the company's lab. (His most recent study looked at how summer heat altered the burrowing speed of young geoducks.) "You'd think after playing around with the same critter for 40 years we'd know everything there is to know," Goodwin said. "But we've only scratched the surface." Besides, he told me in a whisper, "I think they're beautiful. Most people go 'Eeeeew!' That's the first reaction you get. But they're absolutely gorgeous animals."

After decades of trial and error, geoduck farming is gaining ground. Spawned in hatcheries, seed clams (above) are raised on algae (top: C. Lynn Goodwin, the first person to breed geoducks, with algae tanks in Hood Canal, Washington). Environmentalists worry about the impact of farmed geoducks on Puget Sound's shallow bays.

Learn to cook a geoduck at Smithsonian.com/geoducks

LOWER RIGHT: JOTH DAVIS / TAYLOR RESOURCES, INC.

MY KIND OF TOWN
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA



Moviemakers love the old houses with side porches (Aiken-Rhett House, c. 1820) and palmetto-lined streets, says the author (below).

Steeped in Story

The lyrical novelist says the city is more than her hometown, it's her life **BY JOSEPHINE HUMPHREYS**

BERNARD BOUTRIT / WOODFIN CAMP / IPN; SQUIRE FOX

ONE SPRING AFTERNOON I was sitting at my office desk when I heard the sounds of a ruckus outside. And I do welcome a ruckus. My office is on the ground floor of the Confederate Home, where widows lived after the Civil War and old ladies still live today, with the extra studio apartments rented to artists and writers. It's a quiet place hidden away in the busy heart of town, amid lawyers and tourists and Charlestonians out for a stroll. In good weather I leave my two big windows open, knowing something interesting will waft in from Chalmers Street. If I'm lucky it might be oompah music from nearby Washington Park, or a snippet of conversation from passersby who're unaware that I'm only three feet away and may well weave their snippet into what I'm writing. The noise on this particular afternoon was new: a clomping and a hollering. I looked down the street and saw a company of Union soldiers marching my way, attracting the stares of onlookers.

Suddenly the spectators turned on the men in blue, hurling first insults and then projectiles. One big brick struck a soldier in the head, and he fell to his knees with a hand over his bleeding ear. When the brick hit the street, it didn't

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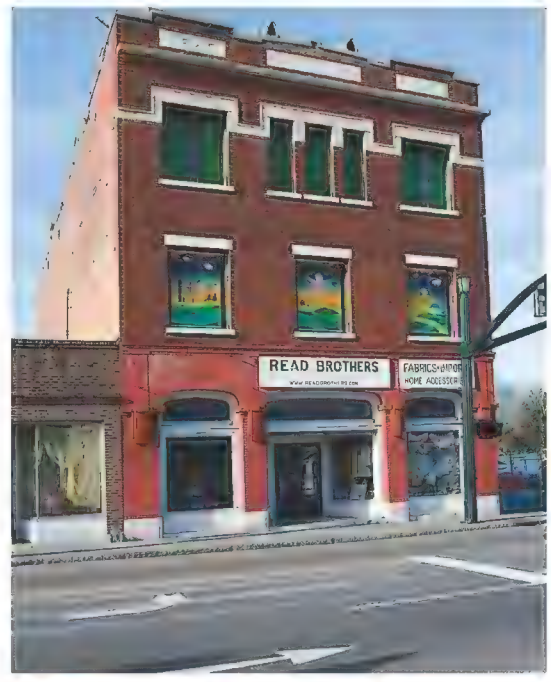
You'd think that a lifetime spent in one town would lead eventually to understanding or at least to boredom. That has not happened.

behave like a brick at all. It bounced. Aha. Better than a ruckus, a movie! Pretty soon everyone recovered, and Makeup came to clean up the fallen soldier.

I count myself lucky to have been born in a town that's rife with contradictions, a difficult past in constant need of retelling, and real characters. Moviemakers seem to love the place. Who would not, seeing for the first time these old tall houses with their unique side porches, the streets lined with palmettos and live oaks, the muted sunlight filtering down through sea mist and humidity? We're called the "Holy City" for our skyline of steeples, and we were named America's "most well-mannered city" 11 times by the late doyenne of etiquette Marjabelle Young Stewart. Visitors notice all this beauty and politeness and history. Sometimes I do too, but more often I can't clearly see anything at all, or at least not in any pure or definable form that could lead to a sobriquet or a superlative. This is because I've lived my whole life here. I know too much. Nothing I see is simply scenery or event, but all is overlaid with memories, and those memories with other memories and stories, plus the truth of history as I've learned it over time, and finally with a film of dreams and losses, bits of music, discoveries, tragedies, wild comedy and fragments of desire. I never think of Charleston as my "hometown." I don't know what I should call it, except maybe my life.

You'd think that a lifetime spent in one town would lead eventually to understanding or at least to boredom (if those two things are not the same). That has not happened. I can still be surprised, for instance, by coincidences, by abrupt outcroppings of irony or by the way history bubbles up in one form or another. Often it's Civil War history, given the local obsession, but it can also be my own.



Packed with treasures (above: Victory Bobbies), Read Brothers (top) reflects Humphreys' view of Charleston.

Last November another movie was filming farther uptown at Read Brothers store, on the corner of Spring and King, where I'd gone under the pretense of buying a bedspread. Read Brothers is the strangest store you'll ever see, a big red-brick, creaky-floored building stocked primarily with fabric but also with used books, vintage toys, folding paper fans, long johns, foam rubber and high-end stereo equipment. I like to drop in periodically to get inspired by the wacky plenitude. Evidently, the movie director was similarly inspired when he chose the store as a setting. Whether the scene was action or romance didn't matter; Read Brothers looks like a place where anything could happen. The line between then and now is thin. Some of that merchandise has been on the shelves for decades. I asked the owner, Marianne Read, what the oldest item in the store was, and without missing a beat she reached into a basket on the counter and grabbed a card of hairpins, "Victory Bobbies," vintage World War II. I bought them for a dollar and asked if I'd gotten the last set. "Oh, no," she said. "We have cartons and cartons in the storeroom."

It was reassuring to think of those extra cartons, surely an eternal supply. I realized that Read Brothers mirrors my image of Charleston itself: a place packed with oddities and treasures that will never be depleted. Or maybe I was really thinking about my own self, desperately hoping my brain will prove to be similarly provisioned for the future. But just as I was leaving Read Brothers I noticed that the stock of merchandise on the main floor seemed a little thinner than it used to be. In a corner where once my childhood friend Pat and I used to select fabric for our dance recital costumes, choosing from shelves and shelves of bright tulle and satin, now the supply of the spangliest and glitteriest had dwindled to a dozen or so bolts. I pretended not to see that. I want Read Brothers to live forever.

Those bobby pins are basically my age. I was born in 1945. The three houses where I grew up are all just a few blocks from my Confederate Home office, and Chalmers Street, which in my childhood formed a line between well-mannered downtown and a more variegated (and artier, wilder, more interesting) uptown, was my main playground. On the corner was the Fireproof Building, which as a child I never entered; it housed historical documents and didn't welcome children, as if History were something that could be destroyed not only by fire but by children. But in adjacent

SQUIRE FOX (2)

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At lunchtime I might eat a hot dog in Washington Park and hope to spot a bit of romantic drama in the corner behind City Hall.

Washington Park, I played every afternoon with Pat, who lived just over the wall, and there was plenty of history for us in the park: not only the scaled-down replica of the Washington Monument (this one dedicated to Confederate soldiers), but also monuments commemorating the poet Henry Timrod; Francis Salvador, the first Jew elected to public office in America; and Elizabeth Jackson, mother of Andrew Jackson. Pat and I roller-skated around these monuments and memorized their inscriptions, which seemed to suggest to us a rich variety of histories. Sometimes we sat on a bench under giant live oaks and watched the comings and goings of lawyers on the way to City Hall. Beyond Pat's house was the Confederate Home, which I rather feared at the time, knowing that it housed old ladies. Charleston's old ladies ruled the town, and if you misbehaved within the hawkish eyesight of one, as Pat and I did once when we skated into the street instead of staying in the fenced park, you'd be in for a tongue-lashing even if the old-lady spy was not one you knew personally.

I don't remember ever hearing the word "woman" spoken in my early years. Is that possible? There were basket ladies, literary ladies, cleaning ladies, flower ladies, artist ladies, ladies of the evening. And two-block cobblestoned Chalmers Street had seen them all. At No. 6, two eccentric and valiant old ladies ran, on their own shoestring, the Old Slave Mart Museum, the single place I encountered where the shocking reality of slavery (human beings were bought and sold here) was acknowledged as part of our history. No. 17, "The Pink House," was the studio of Alice Ravenel Huger Smith, who painted idyllic watercolor landscapes of slaves at work on hazy pastel plantations; but in an earlier age the building had been one of the city's many bordellos. At No. 36, there lived one old lady whose presence in town would shape my future: Josephine Pinckney, the only flesh-and-blood novelist I had glimpsed, and aside from a great-aunt, the only other Josephine I'd heard of.

The history-laden Washington Park boasts monuments (above: G. Washington) to a host of luminaries.

Today, I can spend long hours in the Fireproof Building, reading documents and manuscripts in the library of the South Carolina Historical Society. I like to dig up the stories of people who never made it into history books. At lunchtime I might eat a hot dog in Washington Park and hope to spot a bit of romantic drama in the corner behind City Hall; sometimes the couples who've just gotten a marriage license will scoot out back for a speedy wedding under the oaks, and I can watch the little scene while a story spins up in my head. Or maybe I'll walk on down Chalmers, past the building where Pat and I learned to tap-dance at Miss Mamie Forbes' Dancing School, on to the recently reopened Old Slave Mart Museum, where my friend Nichole is curator. Sometimes we eat lunch on the same bench that was Pat's and mine more than half a century ago.

Pat moved to California in the seventh grade. I don't know what happened to her, but I think of her as the antithesis of me, adventuring a continent away while I stayed home and steadily, with each day's passing but to my infinite surprise, gradually became one of this old town's old-lady spies myself. In the process, the place has grown more mysterious to me, richer in connotations and complexities, more likely to make understanding impossible. At the same time, what becomes possible is a kind of minor revelation, the kind that artists and writers need from time to time. A spur, a seed, the start of something: maybe a reverie, maybe a book.

Remarkable coincidences sometimes happen when you're ready for them. One week ago I took a break from writing about Charleston to go browsing for books, and I saw a new calendar for sale, one that illustrates each month with a sepia-toned photograph from History. The cover photo caught my eye. A suspiciously nostalgic picture, I thought, and therefore maybe not trustable. Girls on a bench . . . sassy pals, full of confidence, not realizing what lies ahead or even that anything *does* lie ahead. It took me more than a few seconds to understand that this was a picture of me, circa 1952. I'm sitting on the bench in Washington Park with my old friend Pat and a younger girl I don't recognize. It's a photograph I'd never seen before. I bought the calendar and showed it to my family. My husband says it could be me, my sister says not, but I'm saying I'm sure of it. I'm saying *that was me*.

JOSEPHINE HUMPHREYS' *novels include* Nowhere Else on Earth *and* Rich in Love.

SQUIRE FOX

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PRESENCE OF MIND

All in the family: Bob Baldwin (left: c. 1965) and Jim Alexander (right: c. 1960) led different lives—with very different endings.

Which Way Out?

The author discovers the surprising satisfactions of a home funeral

BY MAX ALEXANDER

TWO FUNERALS, two days apart, two grandfathers of my two sons. When my father and father-in-law died in the space of 17 days in late 2007, there wasn't a lot of time to ruminate on the meaning of it all. My wife, Sarah, and I were pretty busy booking churches, consulting priests, filing newspaper notices, writing eulogies, hiring musicians, arranging military honor guards and sorting reams of paperwork (bureaucracy outlives us all), to say nothing of having to wrangle last-minute plane tickets a week before Christmas. But all that was a sideshow. Mostly we had to deal with a couple of cold bodies.

In life both men had been devout Catholics, but one was a politically conservative advertising man, the other a left-wing journalist; you'll have to trust me that they liked each other. One was buried, one was cremated. One was embalmed, one wasn't. One had a typical American funeral-home cotillion; one was laid out at home in a homemade coffin. I could tell you that sorting out the details of these two dead fathers taught me a lot about life, which is true. But what I really want to share is that dead bodies are perfectly OK to be around, for a while.

I suppose people whose loved ones are missing in action or lost at sea might envy the rest of us, for whom death typically leaves a corpse, or in the polite language of funeral directors, "the remains." Yet for all our desire to possess this tangible evidence of a life once lived, we've become oddly squeamish about our dead. We pay an average of $6,500 for a funeral, not including cemetery costs, in part so we don't have to deal with the physical reality of death. That's 13 percent of the median American family's annual income.

MAX ALEXANDER COLLECTION (2)

Most people in the world don't spend 13 percent of anything on dead bodies, even once in a while. How we Westerners have arrived at this state is a long story—you can start with the Civil War, which is when modern embalming was developed—but the story is changing.

A movement toward home after-death care has convinced thousands of Americans to deal with their own dead. A nonprofit organization called Crossings (www.crossings.net) maintains that besides saving lots of money, home after-death care is greener than traditional burials—bodies pumped full of carcinogenic chemicals, laid in metal coffins in concrete vaults under chemically fertilized lawns—which mock the biblical concept of "dust to dust." Cremating an unembalmed body (or burying it in real dirt) would seem obviously less costly and more eco-friendly. But more significant, according to advocates, home after-death care is also more meaningful for the living.

I wasn't sure exactly why that would be, but Sarah, her sisters and their mother were intrigued. Bob, her dad (he was the left-wing journalist), had brain cancer and was nearing the end. In hospice care at his home in Maine near our own, he wasn't able to participate in the conversations about his funeral, but earlier he had made it clear that he didn't want a lot of money spent on it.

Sarah hooked up with a local support group for home after-death care. We watched a documentary film called *A Family Undertaking*, which profiles several home funerals around the country. I was especially moved by the South Dakota ranch family preparing for the death of their 90-year-old patriarch, probably because they did not fit my preconception of home-funeral devotees as granola-crunching Berkeley grads.

So a few weeks before Bob died, my 15-year-old son, Harper, and I made a coffin out of plywood and deck screws from Home Depot. I know that sounds cheesy, but it was nice hardwood veneer, and we applied a veneer edging for

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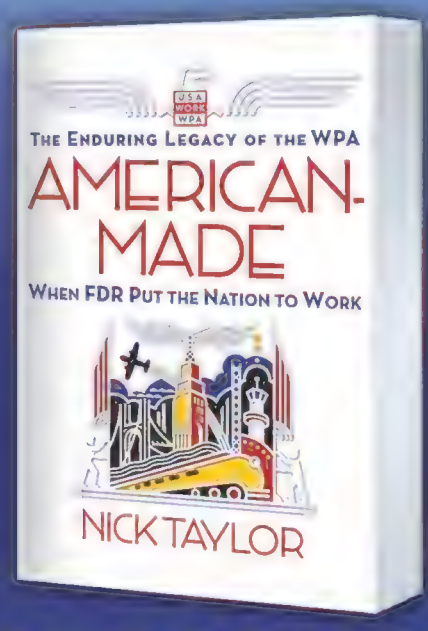

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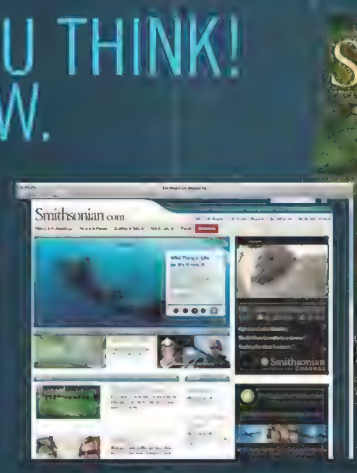

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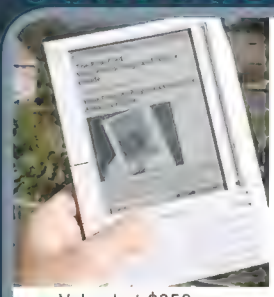

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Baldwin (c. 1995) had made it clear that he would prefer a low-budget exit.

a finished look. I could have followed any number of plans from the Internet, but in the end I decided to wing it with my own design. We routed rabbet joints for a tight construction.

"I guess we wouldn't want him falling out the bottom," Harper said.

"That would reflect poorly on our carpentry skills," I agreed.

We rubbed linseed oil into the wood for a deep burnish, then, as a final touch, made a cross of cherry for the lid. Total cost: $90.98.

Sarah learned that Maine does not require embalming—a recognition that under normal circumstances human remains do not pose a public health risk (nor do they deteriorate visibly) for a few days after death.

When Bob died, on a cold evening in late November, Sarah, her sister Holly and I gently washed his body with warm water and lavender oil as it lay on the portable hospital bed in the living room. (Anointing a body with aromatic oils, which moisten the skin and provide a calming atmosphere for the living, is an ancient tradition.) I had been to plenty of funerals and seen many a body in the casket, but this was the first time I was expected to handle one. I wasn't eager to do so, but after a few minutes it seemed like second nature. His skin remained warm for a long time—maybe an hour—then

MAX ALEXANDER COLLECTION

Alexander (in the late '90s) specified just which Frank Sinatra song to play.

gradually cooled and turned pale as the blood settled. While Holly and I washed his feet, Sarah trimmed his fingernails. (No, they don't keep growing after death, but they were too long.) We had to tie his jaw shut with a bandanna for several hours until rigor mortis set in, so his mouth would not be frozen open; the bandanna made him look like he had a toothache.

We worked quietly and deliberately, partly because it was all new to us but mainly out of a deep sense of purpose. Our work offered the chance to reflect on the fact that he was really gone. It wasn't Bob, just his body.

Bob's widow, Annabelle, a stoic New Englander, stayed in the kitchen during most of these preparations, but at some point she came in and held his hands. Soon she was comfortable lifting his arms and marveling at the soft stillness of her husband's flesh. "Forty-four years with this man," she said quietly.

Later that night, with the help of a neighbor, we wrestled the coffin into the living room, filled it with cedar chips from the pet store and added several freezer packs to keep things cool. Then we lined it with a blanket and lay Bob inside. Movies always show bodies getting casually lifted like a 50-pound sack of grain; in real life (or death?), it strained four of us to move him.

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Baldwin's relatives laid his body out in a coffin made from the author's design.

The next night we held a vigil. Dozens of friends and family trailed through the living room to view Bob, surrounded by candles and flowers. He looked unquestionably dead, but he looked beautiful. Harper and I received many compliments on our coffin. Later, when the wine flowed and the kitchen rang with laughter and Bob was alone again, I went in to see him. I held his cool hands and remembered how, not so long ago, those hands were tying fishing lures, strumming a banjo, splitting wood. Those days were over, and that made me sad, but it also felt OK.

We did have to engage a few experts. Although Maine allows backyard burials (subject to local zoning), Bob had requested cremation. A crematorium two hours away was sympathetic to home after-death care. The director offered to do the job for just $350, provided we delivered the body.

That entailed a daylong paper chase. The state of Maine frowns on citizens driving dead bodies around willy-nilly, so a Permit for Disposition of Human Remains is required. To get that, you need a death certificate signed by the medical examiner or, in Bob's case in a small town, the last doctor to treat him. Death certificates, in theory at least, are issued by the government and available at any town office. But when Sarah called the clerk she was told, "You get that from the funeral home."

"There is no funeral home," she replied.

MAX ALEXANDER COLLECTION

Alexander's headstone is engraved, as he requested, with a parting message.

"There's *always* a funeral home," said the clerk.

Sarah drove to the town office, and after a lot of searching, the clerk turned up an outdated form. The clerk at the next town over eventually found the proper one. Then Sarah had to track down her family doctor to sign it. We had a firm appointment at the crematorium (burning takes up to five hours, we learned), and time was running out. But finally we managed to satisfy the bureaucracy and load Bob's coffin into the back of my pickup truck for an on-time delivery. His ashes, in an urn made by an artist friend, were still warm as Sarah wrote the check. We planned to scatter them over the Atlantic later.

Then my dad died—suddenly, a thousand miles away, in Michigan. He lived alone, far from his three sons, who are spread from coast to coast. Home after-death care was out of the question; even if logistics had allowed it, my father had planned his funeral down to the clothes he would wear in his coffin and the music to be played at the service (Frank Sinatra's "I'll Be Seeing You"). We sat down with the funeral-home director (a nice man, also chosen by my dad) in a conference room where Kleenex boxes were strategically positioned every few feet, and went over the list of services ($4,295 in Dad's case) and merchandise. We picked a powder-coated metal coffin that we thought Dad would have liked; happily, it was also priced at the lower end of the range ($2,595). He had already received a plot

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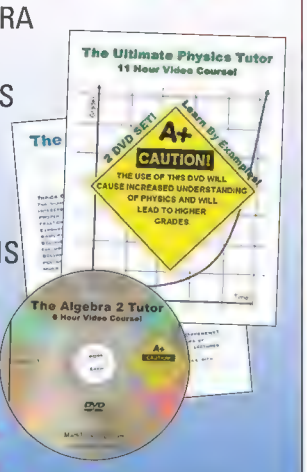
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When I told the funeral-home director the story about my father-in-law, his jaw dropped lower and lower. "That would be illegal in Michigan," he said. But in many cases, it wouldn't.

free from the town. The total cost was $11,287.83, including cemetery charges and various church fees.

I was sad that I hadn't arrived in Michigan to see him before he died; we never said goodbye. "I'd like to see my father," I told the funeral director.

"Oh, you don't want to see him now," he replied. "He hasn't been embalmed."

"Actually, that's precisely why I'd like to see him."

He cleared his throat. "You know there was an autopsy." My father's death, technically due to cardiac arrest, had happened so quickly that the hospital wanted to understand why. "A full cranial autopsy," he added.

Well, he had me there. I relented. Then I told him the story of Sarah's father—the homemade coffin, the bandanna around the jaw—and his own jaw dropped lower and lower.

"That would be illegal in Michigan," he said.

In fact, do-it-yourself burials without embalming are possible in Michigan as long as a licensed funeral director supervises the process. I don't think he was lying, just misinformed.

The next day I got to see my dad, embalmed and made up, with rosy cheeks and bright red lips. Clearly an attempt had been made to replicate

his appearance in life, but he looked more like a wax museum figure. I touched his face, and it was as hard as a candle. Sarah and I exchanged knowing glances. Later she said to me, "Why do we try to make dead people look alive?"

On a frigid December day, we lowered Dad's coffin into the ground—or, more accurately, into a concrete vault ($895) set in the ground. It is not easy for me to say this, but here I must report with embarrassment that in life my father had his own personal logo—a stylized line drawing of his face and his trademark oversize spectacles. It appeared on his stationery, his monogrammed windbreakers, even a flag. In accord with his wishes, the logo was engraved on his tombstone. Beneath were the words "I'll Be Seeing You."

It was different, the funeral director acknowledged, yet not as different as my father-in-law's passage. Home after-death care is not for everyone or every situation, but there is a middle ground. Before my dad's church service, the funeral director confided to me that he was exhausted: "I got a call at midnight to pick up a body in Holland," a town 30 miles away. That night had brought a major snowstorm.

"You drove through that storm in the middle of the night to get a body?" I asked.

He shrugged, explaining that more people these days are dying at home, and when they die, the family wants the body removed immediately. "Usually they call 911," he said.

It occurred to me that if more Americans spent more time with their dead—at least until the next morning—they would come away with a new respect for life, and possibly a larger view of the world. After Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto was assassinated, I saw a clip of her funeral. They had put her in a simple wooden coffin. "Hey," I said to my son, "we could have built that."

MAX ALEXANDER *used to edit for* Variety *and* People. *He is writing a book about Africa.*

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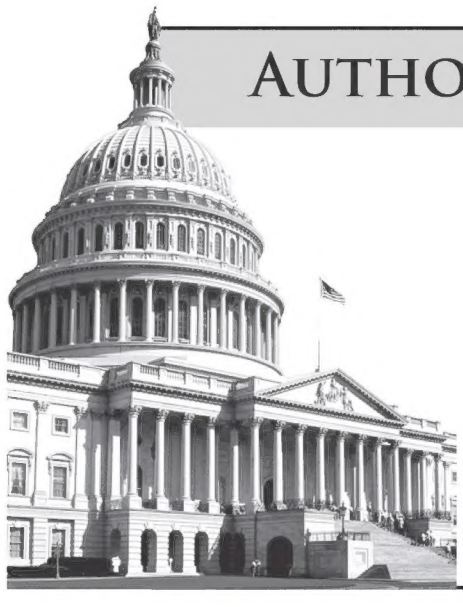

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Let a Thousand Bobbleheads Bloom

How China's "Great Helmsman" became the King of Kitsch **BY BILL BRUBAKER**

ALMOST 60 YEARS have passed since Mao Zedong founded the People's Republic of China in October 1949, promising an economic system that would muzzle capitalism's running dogs. I think most of us can agree that the Great Helmsman screwed things up pretty badly with his disastrous Great Leap Forward, Cultural Revolution and other bloody and misguided social experiments.

But love him or loathe him, Chairman Mao has done more for his people in death than he ever accomplished when he was alive and peddling his *Little Red Book*. He has become the King of Kitsch—and a zillion Chinese manufacturers and shopkeepers are the beneficiaries. Not to mention collectors of totalitarian memorabilia like me. (If you ask nicely, I might show you my gaudy as all get-out Idi Amin shirt or my splendidly outrageous Hafez al-Assad banner.)

I was pondering Mao's legacy one recent morning in Hong Kong while sipping a mocha frappuccino at a Starbucks, just down the street from a McDonald's, Citibank, Hard Rock Cafe and other symbols of unrepentant capitalist greed. Mao would be aghast, I thought, at how utterly decadent China's cities have become. In Beijing, a short stroll from the marble and granite mausoleum where his gray-suited corpse is still on display, a hotel shopping arcade boasts dozens of designer boutiques, including Fendi, Chanel, Cartier, Gucci and Prada.

The Devil may wear Prada, but as Mao once observed, if there is "great disorder under Heaven, the situation is excellent." I found evidence of such excellence while browsing with my wife and daughter in the musty antique, almost-antique and no-damn-way-antique stores on Hong Kong's Hollywood Road. In shop after shop, we were bombarded with offerings of Mao memorabilia by folks eager to make a fast Hong Kong dollar off the Great Leader. Our choices included newly made Mao wristwatches, beer mugs, cigarette lighters, key chains, CD cases, Band-Aid boxes, fridge magnets, playing cards and even bobblehead dolls.

You may ask: What would the Great Teacher think if he could see himself as a bobblehead?

Easy answer: he would be delighted.

It was Comrade Mao, after all, who jumpstarted the Mao-on-everything craze during his Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. While other dictators were content to order up 50-foot-tall statues and inspirational murals, Mao one-upped them by slapping his mug on such everyday items as flower vases, candy jars, incense burners, record albums and windup clocks.

I bought way too much new and old Mao-abilia from one shopkeeper who confessed that while he utterly despised the man, "Mao helps feed my family."

My favorite piece of Mao? Undoubtedly the vintage LP that offers such blasts from the past as "Chairman Mao Is Dearer to Us Than Our Parents"—perhaps written by a teenager grounded for partying too hard at the annual May Day parade.

But the playing cards are pretty cool too. Mao's face is plastered on the Ace, King and Queen and all the other cards—including the Joker.

I never considered Mao much of a Joker. But as the King of Kitsch once noted in a speech to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party: "Without contradictions, the world would cease to exist."

BILL BRUBAKER, *a staff writer at the* Washington Post *from 1985 to 2008, hopes to get a Kim Jong Il button for his birthday.*

ERIC PALMA